

Helena Malmivirta & Suvi Kivelä (eds.)

Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health

Developing service models
with a citizen-centred approach



Project Pumppu, subproject TEHU: Tuotteistetut hyvinvointipalvelut tehokkaan toiminnan edellytys seudullisesti toimivassa tuottaja-tilaajamalleissa ('Productised welfare services a requirement for a regionally well-functioning orderer-producer model'). Section for the Turku region.

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1. Introduction

Helena Malmivirta & Suvi Kivelä

The aging of the population poses a challenge for the fiscal sustainability of the public economy. In accordance with the population projection (2012) from Statistics Finland, by 2030 one quarter of Finns will be over 65 years of age. This means that the age dependency ratio will decrease, and, as the population ages, costs will increase. In a social situation like this, it is extremely important to take good care of one's health and well-being in order to maintain the ability to function for as long as possible. One of the objectives in the current strategy for social and health policy is to consider health aspects in all decision-making in society, in industry and commerce, in work places, and in organisations. The responsibility of the public domain for our basic rights does not, however, remove the individual's responsibility for their personal choices: the balance between the rights and obligations of society promotes social development. This way, caring for one's memory and at the same time, promoting brain health, becomes everybody's responsibility. (Sosiaali- ja terveystalouden strategia 2011 (Socially Sustainable Finland 2020 - Strategy for Social and Health Policy))

Many of us have personally come into contact with issues with memory health. These worries might be related to a relative, friend, or a member of our family suffering from memory disorders. In order to maintain good health and brain health in particular, special attention should be paid to these issues from very early on. Choices related to exercise and diet as well as activating the brain sufficiently all affect our health – as well as our brain health. By being aware of how hobbies we like as well as a healthy lifestyle promote brain health, we can all choose to act in a way that helps to prevent memory disorders (Muistiliitto (The Alzheimer Society of Finland) 2013). Now, at the beginning of the 2000s, a large number of the population are retiring, and in a much better shape than the previous generation. They have many healthy years to look forward to, if they take care of their health and brain health. In the future, services provided by public social and health care services alone will not sufficiently cover all of the people suffering from memory disorders. Therefore, the focus should be shifted from the actual treatment of illness to actively promoting well-being, improving quality of life and taking care of one's health. This would reduce the pressure on public services and restrain the growth of social expenditure. (Malmivirta 2013)

The goal of the cross-regional Pumpu project was to respond to a social need by creating new kinds of welfare services and ways for producing them by developing operational methods for multiple service providers, creating service concepts designed with a user-centric approach, as well as ensuring the seamless connection of such services. To achieve this goal, the project has strived to create a meeting place for the service providers and customers as well as to productise competence and services. The project aimed at strengthening the role of the user of the services as well as the need-oriented approach in the service processes.

The Pumppu project (Citizen Centric Welfare Services with Multiple Service Providers), funded by the European Regional Development Fund, was divided into five regional subprojects, one of which was the TEHU subproject (Tuotteistetut hyvinvointipalvelut tehokkaan toiminnan edellytys seudullisesti toimivassa tuottaja-tilaajamalleissa). In this TEHU subproject, service structures for regional well-being services were developed with a customer-oriented approach. The project was carried out between 1 May 2011 and 31 May 2014. The TEHU subproject was funded by the Southern Finland ERDF Programme Unit and the Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS), who covered 70% and 30% respectively of the total budget. The subproject was coordinated by the TUAS research, development and innovation unit for welfare services, which has, from the beginning 2014, operated as the combined unit for health and well-being.

The TEHU subproject, administered by the research and development operations of the TUAS Health and Well-being unit, develops regional welfare service structures with a citizen-centred approach by packaging welfare services into new service concepts and products.

The TEHU project consisted of several parts which all aimed at developing the service production in order to make it more efficient through developing new products or models for the division of duties. The main goal was the optimal use of all of the regional resources in the welfare and well-being sectors. The project consisted of the following parts:

- a) Development of terminal care and service structures in the Loimaa region
- b) Methods and tools for promoting brain health to complement the service structure in the Turku region
- c) Home care at the heart of care for the elderly and the services provided at home (implemented in the Härkätie municipalities).

This publication focuses on the TEHU section in the Turku region, *which creates methods and tools for promoting brain health to complement the service structure in the Turku region*. In the planning phase, the section was renamed as follows: *Aivoterveyttä ja muistin toimintaa edistävät taide- ja kulttuurilähtöiset palvelumallit Turun seudun palvelurakennetta täydentämään (Art and culture-based service models promoting brain health and memory to complement the service structure in the Turku region)*. From now on, the shorter version, *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health*, shall be used in this publication. The aim of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work was to create new kinds of service models that promote brain and memory health for the third sector in order to complement the services provided by the public sector. Four preventive service models were developed in this part of the project.

The target group of the development activities were 65–75-year-old citizens in their so-called third age who were interested in their brain health and activating their memory functions. Most people in the third age are no longer working, but nevertheless are in a good shape and lead very active lives on the verge of or after retirement. Good health enables an active lifestyle which, in turn, supports good health. This gives good cause to make a fresh start just before retirement (Karisto 2009, 38, 41). At this age, people typically have the time to focus on their personal well-being. There is still time for self-fulfilment and new possibilities. Furthermore, the third age is a time of independence and activity, which can be used for promoting and maintaining one's health and well-being and in particular promoting one's brain health.



The health and self-care behaviour of 65–75-year-olds in the third age, who are interested in their personal health and well-being, can be influenced by using new kinds of citizen-centric service models. Participatory and active art and culture activities, for which health and well-being-related goals have been set, can be used to achieve empowerment and growth of one's individual strength. This will, in turn, awaken an active interest in taking care of one's personal health and well-being. When participatory art and culture activities are put into practice in the spirit of sociocultural animation, health and well-being can be promoted with existing resources in the immediate cultural environment of the people targeted.

In the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work, human beings are understood as physical, mental, social and cultural beings that fulfil themselves and their desires as active operators, in a way which combines the health aspect of well-being closely with nothing less than being human. Honkasalo (2012) brings forth Gadamer's (1996) view on the connection of health, illness and healing with cultural change and existence. Medical knowledge alone is not sufficient for understanding these aspects; a wider understanding of human existence is required. (Gadamer 1996; Honkasalo 2012) Honkasalo has also studied health and illness as phenomena within the sphere of culture, with the objective of creating interdisciplinary discussion arenas and bridges, whilst striving to understand the cultural aspects of health and illness from an interdisciplinary perspective (Honkasalo 2012). Health is not an absolute value for everybody, but it can be considered a means for achieving other valuable goals. According to Honkasalo (2012), health can be defined as the ability to attain goals considered valuable. As an instrument, health can be considered physical, mental and social capital as well as the characteristics, knowledge and skills which people need in managing their lives and achieving their goals.

The results of various projects combining art, culture, health and well-being indicate that participatory art and culture activities have resulted in a number of positive changes in people suffering from memory disorders. An active presence in the activities led to improved mental vitality, speech recovery, a sense of meaningful experience and the strengthening of the sense of presence, as well as recovery of posture amongst participants. The initial phases of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work delved into fine arts and visual perception, and on a more general level, the literature and research that combines various art forms and brain activation. The premise was that goal-oriented art pedagogy based on experience-oriented art learning and combining art with the social aspect can be used to promote brain and memory activation (Malmivirta 2011). As a part of the lifelong human growth process, it is possible to be aware and consciously activate brain and memory functions in order to promote good brain health (Malmivirta 2013). The research and development work builds a bridge for interdisciplinary discussion by describing what takes place in target-oriented and participatory art and culture activities, which are based on the participants' personal history and constructed with an interdisciplinary approach. Experiences gained from participatory art and culture activities are examined by analysing material collected from observations, photographs, videos and interviews with the participants. After the analysis of the all of the material, which has formed into narratives, we have come up with the keys which, according to the participants, are significant in promoting brain health.

In the second chapter of the publication, following this introduction, we examine the development of the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health service models from a citizen-centric perspective as well as the current need for preventive

measures, caused by the aging of the population and the increase in memory disorders. The chapter delves deeper into the means the government and the municipalities have at their disposal to promote brain health, such as various programmes and documents. In addition to this, previous research and development projects as well as the role of the third sector as a service producer are discussed. In the third chapter, we define the third age as a stage of life as well as the significance of art and culture for health and well-being in this active phase. The fourth chapter focuses on the strategy of practical action research which is behind the development of the service models; the pedagogic framework of participatory, target-oriented art activities; the art-pedagogical approach as a part of the lifelong learning philosophy, as well as sociocultural thinking in the instruction of participatory art activities within the service models.

The fourth chapter, entitled Applying the action research strategy to the development and implementation of service models, describes the tasks of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work. The practical development and enactment of the service models as well as art interventions and the related participatory art activities are discussed in chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9. In addition to this, interviews and observations are used to depict the results obtained and keys developed for promoting brain and memory health. Finally, chapter 12 builds a bridge from the keys developed in the project to the definitions of brain health and provides an assessment of the research and development work carried out within the project.

We would like to thank all of the active and committed participants in the activities. This research and development work was carried out in practice, and by constantly developing the practice by genuinely listening to the voice of the participants. We would also like to thank our fellow instructors and designers: artist Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro from Salon Taitelijaseura ry, occupational therapist Hanne-Maarit Suokas from Varsinais-Suomen Muistiyhdistys ry, puppet artist Tiina Puranen from RahtiTeatteri, as well as dance artist Jonna Aaltonen from the Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland. The competence from the various spheres of art and the desire to create something new, numerous planning sessions, reflective speculations and a deep commitment to developing the service models are the factors that have enabled this cyclical research and development work on the service models. We would also like to thank Helena Norokallio from Turun Lähimmäispalveluyhdistys ry Kotikunnas, and from Salon taidemuseo Veturitalli, director Laura Luostarinen, and curator Pirjo Juusela, as well as the museum staff, for the support they have shown us by letting us use their facilities and promoting our work in many other ways. Additionally, we want to thank our student assistant Anni Rumpunen for the transcription of the interviews and video materials.





2. Increase in the incidence of memory disorders and the need for developing new kinds of preventive service models

Suvi Kivelä & Helena Malmivirta

According to Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI), the umbrella organisation of the Alzheimer Society of Finland, in 2010 some 35.6 million people were suffering from memory disorders, and by 2030, the number may, according to some estimates, reach 65.7 million. In Finland, more than 13,000 people are diagnosed with a progressive memory disorder every year, and there are nearly 130,000 patients in total suffering from such disorders. This number is expected to increase in the near future. The continuously growing number of people affected by memory disorders and the related concern caused pose a significant challenge for the social and healthcare sector everywhere in Europe. The resources and possibilities available to the public sector to rise to this challenge are limited, and as healthcare expenditure keeps rising, other operators and new preventive measures are dearly needed to assist with this shared venture.

2.1. Towards a 'memory-friendly' Finland by preventing memory disorders

In Finland, a committee set up by the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has drafted a *National Memory Programme 2012–2020, Creating a 'memory-friendly' Finland*, (STM 2012) to combat this situation, which is significant both in terms of public health and the national economy. The National Memory Programme aims to support municipalities and municipal federations in preparing for the increased number of people suffering from memory disorders as well as for developing an ethically, socially and economically sound care and service system. The programme aims to influence the decision-makers in local administrations who are in a key position to develop municipal service systems, as well to make sustainable decisions to 1. promote brain health, prevent memory disorders and promote early recognition of memory disorder symptoms and 2. secure timely treatment, rehabilitation and other support for those suffering from and affected by memory disorders. Political choices and decisions can significantly promote public health, improve the quality and effectiveness of treatment and services and control the growth of expenditure in an aging Finland.

The high costs of memory disorders are caused by the great number of patients and their extensive need for social and healthcare services; as many as three in four patients requiring round-the-clock care suffer from memory disorders. According to an estimate by the National Memory Programme committee, only half of those suffering from memory disorders have been diag-

nosed, and only one quarter of Alzheimer patients receive appropriate medical treatment. With early diagnostics, treatment and rehabilitation, the functional ability and quality of life of those affected by memory disorders can be improved and, at the same time, the growth of the total expenditure can be restrained. Preventive services and promotion of brain health can significantly reduce the incidence of memory disorders and the related need for services in the future. This will also control the related costs. Small changes to the modes and methods of operation, based on knowledge about the effectiveness of such methods, can have significant effects, both from a human and economic perspective. Investments in promoting brain health and preventing memory disorders will also be cost-effective from the point of view of the national economy. (STM 2012)

A 'memory-friendly' Finland is built on four pillars:

1. promoting brain health
2. the right attitudes toward brain health as well as treatment and rehabilitation of memory disorders
3. ensuring a good quality of life for people suffering from memory disorders and their families, with timely support, treatment, rehabilitation and services
4. reinforcing extensive scientific, research-based knowledge and competence.

The programme is connected to the objectives of the Strategy for social and health policy as well as the existing treatment and quality recommendations. Its implementation will be linked, for example, to the implementation of the new Act on Care Services for Older People (Laki ikääntyneen väestön toimintakyvyn tukemisesta sekä iäkkäiden sosiaali- ja terveystalvveluista, no. 980 of 2102) as well as other programmes, such as the National Development Programme for Social Welfare and Health Care (the Kaste programme). Preparing for the growing need for services in Finland requires joint activities and shared responsibilities. We are now calling on the state, municipalities and municipal federations, universities and research organisations, the third sector and all citizens to act and take responsibility in order to achieve a memory-friendly Finland together. The *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* project in the TEHU project of the Turku region tackles the challenges of these four pillars as well as the challenge outlined in the national memory programme, in which municipalities and municipal federations together with the third sector arrange opportunities for the citizens to participate in activities that support brain health, considering the different needs of the citizens in arranging these activities. (STM 2012)

The Alzheimer Society of Finland is coordinating the implementation of the National Memory Programme 2012–2020 at the national level in the participating organisations, with funding from Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) granted specifically for this purpose from 2013 onwards. This work focuses on promoting brain health and increasing awareness. The Alzheimer Society of Finland has, for example, compiled a material bank from its member associations on the best organisational practices for promoting brain health. In addition to this, it has a representative in the steering group of the National Memory Programme. Furthermore, the Alzheimer Society of Finland has founded a specialist group of memory-disorder patients and their carers, with the task of bringing forth topical perspectives from the patients and their carers regarding the operations of the Alzheimer Society of Finland and promoting discussion of important themes, ideas, and opinions. (Muistiliitto ry 2014) The TEHU section in the Turku region has focused on development cooperation with the local memory disorder associations Varsinais-Suomen Muistiyhdistys ry and Salon Muistiyhdistys ry.

The guidelines for services for senior citizens are built from both national and local administration-level policies. As a part of Finland's policy programme for health promotion (2007), preparations for a programme to enhance the contribution of art and culture to health and well-being for the period 2010–2014 were launched. This programme, later named Art and culture for well-being, has three priority areas to promote health and well-being through art and culture:

1. culture in promoting social inclusion, capacity building, networking and participation in daily life and living environments;
2. art and culture as part of social welfare and health promotion; and
3. art and culture in support of well-being and health at work.

With these priority areas, the aim of the programme is to promote well-being and health by means of art and culture and to enhance inclusion at the individual, community and societal levels. Art and culture services are seen and can be used, according to the prevention programme, as a preventive opportunity and part of the social welfare and health care system as well as in preventing social exclusion. (Liikanen 2010, 3, 25)

Recognising and strengthening the resources as well as recognising and preventing risk factors are the two starting points for health promotion, which can be examined both at the level of the individual as well as for society as a whole. Therefore, combining art and culture with health and well-being can also be examined from the point of view of preventive work. Social and culture services and cooperation with various civic organisations can be used to strengthen the sense of community and engagement and to develop new citizen-centric service models. A joint result of the several projects committed to the programme is that art and culture clearly are important components of a good life. They treat and empower both the body and the mind. The preventive social and health policy is already clearly changing shape. At the same time, art and culture are already partially established as part of the social and health care services, for instance as culture service plans for senior citizens and cultural service vouchers for the working-age population.

Traditionally, welfare services have been regarded as the responsibility of the social and health care sectors, but today, all municipal services and activities are understood to significantly influence the well-being of the residents. Activities promoting the health and well-being of citizens are carried out for instance in municipal education, youth and sport services. (Kokos 2010, 183–84) The objective of the 'Sivistyksen suunta 2020' ('Direction of education 2020') educational policy programme of the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities is that in the municipality of the future, cultural services would have a great significance in the promotion of well-being, both at work and during leisure time. Cultural services improve quality of life and promote a positive social atmosphere, and enhance a sense of solidarity and local identity. (Suomen kuntaliitto (The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities) 2011; please see Malmivirta & Taivainen 2012)

The objective of *the quality recommendation aiming to guarantee high-quality ageing and improve services* (STM 2008), prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, and the National Institute for Health and Welfare Stakes, is to support municipalities in developing services for the elderly from the

perspective of local needs and resources, in collaboration with the elderly, the other residents, service users and their family members, organisations, entrepreneurs and local churches. Different municipalities may offer different service concepts for the needs of the elderly. However, all municipalities have a need to increase preventive activities that sustain the functional capacities of the elderly. Therefore, securing the well-being of the elderly and preparing for the demographical changes requires an active aging policy from the local authorities. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has set an objective that all municipalities shall have an ageing policy strategy in place, approved by the municipal council, which is adhered to in all decision-making regarding the elderly. This aging policy strategy will be drafted in cooperation with the different administrative branches, residents, organisations, the business sector and other relevant operators in the municipality, and it shall define the way in which well-being and health are promoted in the municipality and how the areas of responsibility shall be divided between the different actors. (STM 2013, Suomen Kuntaliitto 2014)

The objective of the aging strategy (2009–2012) in the city of Turku is to create guidelines for organising the service production, taking into consideration future service needs and changes in the operational environment; to guide the production and development of services for the elderly, and finally, to support decision-making in the city. The political ageing strategy is targeted at the service structure for citizens aged 75 years and older and, for preventive work, also to the 65–74-year-old age group. The city is responsible for organising the services, but some services will be acquired from private and third-sector service producers, for instance via service vouchers or similar solutions, so that residents have a wider selection of services to choose from. The ageing strategy emphasises supporting the independent initiative of the residents, aiming for increased personal responsibility, and widening the choice for the residents in the organisation of the service production. (Turun kaupungin ikääntymispoliittinen strategia vuosille 2009–2012 (The City of Turku Political Aging Strategy 2009–2012))

In Turku, the significance of preventive services as part of the services targeted at the elderly has been understood. The strategy for preventive services for the elderly for 2013–2016 (Ennaltaehkäisevien vanhuspalveluiden toimintasuunnitelma vuosille 2013–2016) of the Welfare Division of the City of Turku takes into consideration cross-administrational collaboration with the third sector, educational institutions, churches, organisations and associations, volunteers and private operators, and implements this collaboration as activities that are as participatory as possible. From 1 January 2014 onwards, the focus of services for the elderly in Turku will be shifted towards preventive services that promote health and well-being and that can be considered important and profitable investments in the future. The concept behind the preventive services is the promotion of health and well-being and the securing of the related advice and service coordination. The objective is to support senior citizens' quality of life with a respectful approach. It's not just about adding years to life, but life to the years.

The strategy for the preventive services represents all of the city-offered preventive services for the elderly as well as several projects in which the city participates. There are several laws, recommendations and programmes in the background, such as the Laki ikääntyneen väestön toimintakyvyn tukemisesta sekä iäkkäiden sosiaali- ja terveystalvetaista ('Act on supporting the functional ability of the elderly and on the social and health care services for the elderly'), which came into effect on 1 July 2013, *the quality recommendation aiming to guarantee high-quality ageing and improve services (STM 2008)*, *the National Development Programme for Social Welfare and Health Care (Kaste) (2008)*, *the Quality Recommendations for Health Promotion*

(STM 2006), the Health 2015 public health programme (2001), the National Memory Programme (STM 2012), *Tie hyvään vanhuuteen – vanhusten hoidon ja palvelujen linjat vuoteen 2015* ('A roadmap for good old age: policy definitions for a good care and services for older people 2015') (STM 2007), the National Framework for High-Quality Services for Older People, and the *Laatua laatusuosituksella* ('Quality with quality recommendations') publication by Stakes. The above mentioned documents, recommendations and laws also guide the planning and execution of the TEHU project in the Turku region.

2.2. Review of previous research and development projects

The results of recent research and development projects which show that art and culture play a significant role in the health and well-being of the elderly have been taken into account in the planning of the citizen-centric *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* service models. Participation in art activities is proven to have an effect on speech recovery, activation of vocabulary, bodily changes, enhancing active presence, increased social interaction and experienced health and well-being.

One special characteristic of Turku being the European Capital of Culture in 2011 was the influence of culture on well-being as a wide and interdisciplinary theme. Work that combines culture and well-being has become a regionally, nationally and internationally significant new competence area whose importance is increasing rapidly throughout Europe. The future of Turku as a capital of culture will be based on the continuation and deepening of this interdisciplinary cooperation. In its final report (2011), the Turku European Capital of Culture 2011 follow-up group notes that research on the well-being benefits of art and culture should be carried out in direct interaction with art and culture activities. The collaboration between the culture and well-being sectors should be primarily functional and practical, but also stress the importance of research and influence the educational systems.

Previously, several projects and activities combining art, culture and well-being have been carried out in the Turku and Salo regions. The target groups have varied from children to the working-age population and from the elderly to special groups. Most projects related to promoting brain health and memory functions focus on a healthy lifestyle, including exercise, sleep, nutrition and social interaction, as well as using memory aids. Examples of such research include *Muista Pääasia – ikääntyvän ihmisen kognitiivisen toimintakyvyn ylläpitäminen* (2008–2011) ('Remember the main thing – maintaining the cognitive capacity of the elderly') by the Miina Sillanpää Foundation and the *Käytä pääomaasi* ('Use your head') project by Salon Muistiyhdistys (2012–2014).

Based on research within the 'Muista Pääasia' project, course-based training was noted to have a positive effect on the cognitive abilities of the participants as well as their own assessment of their everyday functional ability and memory functions. Effects observed in the participants' health as experienced by the participants themselves were still present at the time of the follow-up study conducted six months later. The results of this development project indicate that the knowledge and competence related to maintaining brain health and promoting well-being obtained as early on as possible really make a difference. (Rolig, Kurki & Ojanen 2011)

One example of a project focussing on exercise is the national Strength in Old Age – Health exercise programme for older adults (2005–2014), coordinated by the Age Institute. The objective of the programme was to promote the quality of life and independent living at home for the over 75s with a weakened functional ability by developing and increasing exercise counselling, guided strength and balance exercises and opportunities for daily and outdoor exercise for the target group. The activities were organised in collaboration with organisations and the different administrative branches in the public sector. As a result of the interactive instruction provided by the Age Institute, a mentoring model for operators in the field of health exercise for the elderly was developed (please see the Age Institute web site). The target group of the Strength in Old Age programme will be extended with the National Policy Programme for Older People’s Physical Activity; Health and well-being from physical activity, published in 2011, to cover new stages in life: people who are retiring as well as older people in home services, service housing or long-term institutional care. (Karvinen, Kalmari & Koivumäki 2011)

Projects that combine art and well-being are often targeted at those already suffering from memory disorders or chronic diseases requiring long-term care. The results of the Hymykuopat – hyvinvointipalveluiden monialaiset yhteistuotannot (‘Dimples – multisectoral co-production of welfare services’) project, organised in five municipalities and administered by the city of Salo, indicate that art and culture have been significant factors. Patients within long-term health care services suffering from memory disorders experienced changes in their sense of body, sense of meaning, social interaction, and speech activation (Malmivirta & Taivainen 2012). Similar effects were observed in the KUVA – Culture for Elderly People project in Turku (Koponen 2012). The objective of the ongoing Kulttuurin keinoin muistisairausten haasteita päin (‘Tackling memory disorders with through culture’) project (2012–2014), organised by Salon Muistiyhdistys ry, is to support the life management and independent daily life and to maintain the functional ability of those suffering from memory disorders with the means of culture. (Salon Muistiyhdistys ry 2014)

In the EVIVA welfare project (2011–2015) co-ordinated by the Cultural Services, Sports Services Centre and Youth Department of City of Turku, the residents of the city are encouraged to participate more actively in the usage, planning and execution of recreational free time services in order to develop a new kind of urban culture. The goal of the project is to shift the focus from corrective and costly (from the point of view of the public economy) services towards activities and services that prevent loneliness among the elderly, which would both lighten the burden on municipal economy and reduce the need for social and health services. (Ekroos 2011)

Life experience is also seen as a resource and the basis for psychological well-being in the Meaning in Old Age – Knowledge and Tools for Supporting the Psychological Well-Being of Older People (RAY 2011–2014) research and development project by the Age Institute. The objective of this project is to engage, gather and encourage the elderly to discuss and consider the available means and opportunities for the maintenance of their psychological well-being. The life lived and life experiences gathered are seen as the most significant resource of the elderly. (Laine 2011, 14–15; Jokinen, Laine, Fried & Heimonen 2012, 42–43) The significance of memories and the life lived for the elderly and their identity was also a central aspect of the TIKUTUS (Sticks - Innovative approaches to health promotion and memory support for the aging) project in which technology, namely USB sticks, was developed into an interactive tool for reminiscing. The project was run by the University of Helsinki and Lappeenranta University of Technology (2010–2013) in co-operation with the public sector, operators from the third sector within services for the elderly and social and health services. (Karisto & Pekkarinen 2013)



2.3. The third sector as the producer of welfare services

Suvi Kivelä

The third sector has been defined in many ways. Usually the third sector simply refers to the area between the public sector, private sector and homes; the so-called area of 'doing things differently', in which volunteering, independence and non-profit work are typical. The third sector is at times also referred to as civic society or community, especially when aiming to emphasise the nature of the related operations, means of organisation, or relationship with the state, municipalities, or businesses. Therefore, the third sector most often refers to organisations, associations and foundations as well as co-operative organisations that do not seek profit or other immediate economic gain. In most cases, this means, in practice, registered non-profit associations. (Koivisto et al. 2010, 13; Anheier 2005; Matthies 1997; Helander 1998)

Some third sector operators are associations or corporations fully based on volunteer work, while others employ professionals and top experts from different fields. In addition to this, the organisations' relationship with the state and the municipalities varies a great deal. Some may receive a small operating grant from the municipality while others operate very closely as a part of the public service provision, and may take on various official duties. The service operations of some third sector operators are increasingly similar to commercial operations, while some stress the value base of their operations as some kind of opposing force to commercial ventures. The size and operating environment of third sector operators varies greatly, from small local associations to large international and global organisations, such as the WHO. (Anheier 2005; Koivisto et al. 2010)

The third sector plays a significant role in the Finnish welfare state service system, and in recent years, its role has grown more and more significant, particularly due to the aging of the population and the financial difficulties of the public sector. Therefore, third sectors organisations are asked to provide more and more services. In recent decades, other factors related to the expansion of the operational environment of the third sector have been internationalisation and globalisation, society becoming increasingly multifaceted and divided, changes in consumer behaviour, and the development of information and communication technology. The general rise in the standard of living and increased free time have also had effect on the expansion of the third sector. (Koivisto et al. 2010, 12–14)

The basic activities of third sector operators often promote well-being without explicitly providing well-being or welfare services. Therefore, as organisations are already enablers, executors and promoters of well-being services, they can be seen as a resource for welfare services. Not only do these organisations complement the municipal service offering, but they promote the common good and have, for a long time, also patched the gaps in the municipal services in areas in where public services are insufficient and the conditions make commercial service provision unviable. Organisations have also acted as predecessors for many services that later on have evolved into welfare services provided by the municipalities and the state. In Finland, the historical roots of welfare services go back to the activities of local churches and the state: from the 1800s onward, in ideological, non-profit organisations, and from the 1900s, municipal operations. (Cederlöf 2010, 95)

The activities of sports clubs, theatre performances, concerts and other pastime activities automatically contain elements that promote people's well-being. In the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health project, like in so many similar projects, it is essential to focus particularly on the provision of those third sector well-being services in which the promotion of the well-being of the client or the target group has been explicitly defined as an objective of the operations. (Koivisto et al. 2010, Kansallinen muistiohjelman 2012–2020 (The National Memory Programme 2012–2020))

As the economic situation of the municipalities has weakened, their role as service providers has started to change. According to the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the usage of alternative methods in the development and organisation of services should be considered. Examples of such methods include different ways of outsourcing services, expanded use of service vouchers, and the third sector as the provider of new kinds of services. (Suomen Kuntaliitto 2014.) In the municipalities, the third sector is seen as a significant operator for maintaining and promoting residents' health and well-being. According to the Tie hyvään vanhuuteen – Vanhusten hoidon ja palvelujen linjat vuoteen 2015 ('A roadmap for good old age: policy definitions for good care and services for older people 2015') report (2007) by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, operational objectives include enhancing the functional ability of the residents and the development of the service structures at the regional level.

Traditionally, the role of the third sector as a service producer in the fields of art and culture has been strong. In some cities, local associations and foundations are central actors as founders and maintainers of museums, theatres, orchestras and art education institutions. (Please see Ruusuvirta & Saukkonen 2010) The third sector within the field of culture is made up of different kinds of operators, from small local village and hobby associations to professional art and culture institutions. Traditional cultural services, such as libraries, museums, training centres and theatres create the basic conditions for all to enjoy art and culture. However, the operations of organisations within the field of culture extend far further in society, and include, for example, improving living environments, strengthening social community activities, promoting well-being at work, creative therapies and art education. The role and significance of the third sector in producing services that increase the well-being of citizens has also been discussed in the cultural sector. (Koivisto 2010; Brandenburg 2008, 11, 37; please see also Liikanen 2010)

Lately the relationship between municipalities and organisations has started to change. Previously, this interactive relationship could be best described as the organisations acting as kinds of lobbyist for their members or the issues they represent, towards the local administrations. Now, the organisations are engaging in more and more collaboration with local administration and thereby becoming co-operative service providers and partners. (Helander 2004, 17–18; Möttönen & Niemelä 2005, 151–155) In addition to this, a new third sector has come into play, different from the traditional associations which are based on a popular movement, not seeking profit and volunteer work (please see Ruusuvirta & Saukkonen 2010).



3. The third age and the possibilities of art in promoting health and well-being

Helena Malmivirta

The third age is the phase of life between retiring and old age. This stage of the life course changes the way childhood, youth, middle-age and old age have previously been defined. Three factors have contributed to the third age becoming visible:

1. Due to the aging of the large post-war generations, a larger part of the population than ever before will enter the third age in the coming years.
2. People who retire will be in a better shape than ever before and have more active years to look forward to.
3. People entering the third age have new expectations and attitudes and expect an active retirement. Those in the third age no longer accept the traditional role of the elderly, which sets new expectations for being retired. (Karisto & Konttinen 2004, 13–14; Haarni 2010, 8–9)

3.1. The third age as a stage of life

We may be old, but we are no geriatrics. We don't want folk dancing or arts and crafts clubs. (A participant in the art activities of the Genius Body service model)

The third age is described as strong aging, healthy aging, active aging, productive aging and as an age directed towards personal resources (Kautto 2004, 7–8; Koskinen 2004, 30). Self-actualisation and self-fulfilment, independence and being active are all seen as elements of the third age (Jyrkämä 2005, 305–355; Haarni 2010, 9). Third age can also be defined via personal experience. People do not feel like senior citizens or 'old people'. As regards psychological well-being, maintaining a desired and typical level of activity is significant. Similarly, the sense of participation plays a strong role in, for instance, having the feeling of belonging somewhere, being part of something bigger than yourself: part of a family, part of different communities, such as hobby-related societies etc. and, even society as a whole, mankind, humanity, and the universe. From a socio-political perspective, the third age is regarded as interesting for instance from the perspective of housing and health promotion. (Karisto 2004)

The thought of aging as a positive process and a life phase filled with resources lies behind the approach of striving towards active, successful and good aging. Measures that promote and maintain activity also strive to ensure that the aging population will adopt healthy living habits. Productivity, such as caring for close relatives or participation in volunteer work, is seen

as very important after retirement. One of the most important topics in any address related to old age is how to prevent and postpone the need for services. (Koskinen 2004; Haarni 2010) For this reason, pensioners are challenged to take responsibility for their health and well-being.

In the citizen-centric approach, reinforcing the citizen's sense of agency is essential, putting individuals in the key position for caring for their brain health through their lifestyle choices, free time activities, working life, cultural services and in the decision-making in society (Virjonen 2013, 9). A shared concern is how to keep our memories functional, our brains flexible and thereby prevent memory disorder related service needs.

*Youth, large,
lusty, loving —
youth full of grace,
force, fascination.
Do you know
that Old Age
may come after you with equal grace,
force, fascination?*

Walt Whitman



Whitman's poem depicts man's youth and old age in a fun way, but also demonstrates how old age is something to look forward to, a rich phase of life. The third-agers of today were young in the 1950s and 1960s and involved in creating a new kind of youth culture, which has had a strong influence on our lifestyle and taste ideals, consumer habits, the free-time industry, and the whole economy (Karisto & Konttinen 2004, 14; Kautto 2004, 7). Now, in the 2010s, aging is also seen as resource in socio-political discourse. The aging are expected to continue to be active citizens after retirement. They are expected to participate in civic and volunteer activities, to help others, and to engage in non-paid work. (Haarni 2010, 32-33) This means a new kind of positive senior culture in which aging is seen as a positive resource.

3.2. Union of art, health, and well-being

The participation of pensioners in volunteer work and civic activities has also been examined from the perspective of health promotion and maintenance, and the results indicate that these activities greatly enhance the well-being and experienced

health of pensioners (Haarni 2010, 10; please see Sirven & Debrand 2008). According to the researchers, participation in volunteer and civic activities seems to decelerate the worsening of functional ability and experienced health of pensioners and to prevent depression. Being active and participating in volunteer work, hobbies included, also seems to be connected to experiencing contentment and happiness, as well as having good self-esteem. (Hyyppä & Liikanen 2005; Hyyppä 2013) It would be possible to positively influence the well-being and health development of the population by increasing the amount and target-orientation of pastime interests related to art and culture, instead of passive leisure time activities, such as watching television.

According to Hyyppä and Liikanen (2005), cultural hobbies and art improve people's well-being and health, when health is examined with a holistic approach and as people themselves experience their health. In *The Enigma of Health* (1996), Gadamer examines health from the perspectives of phenomenology and hermeneutics, defining health as a kind of presence with other people and active participation in whatever people value as significant in their lives. According to Gadamer, health and illness are related to cultural change and existence. Therefore, the health aspect of well-being would not be measurable only with medical criteria, but it would also need a wider understanding of human existence (Honkasalo 2012, 7). *Cultural experience and health – The coherence of health and leisure time activities* (2001) by Konlaan is regarded as one of the ground-breaking cornerstone studies on the visibility of art, culture and their effects on well-being in the Nordic countries. The study has had a significant role in Finnish discourse on art and well-being. The results of Konlaan's extensive research, which examined the health data and cultural pastimes of some 25,000 Swedes, indicate that consuming culture and art activities promotes health and prevents memory disorders. According to the study, those engaged in cultural activities live longer than those who do not. (Konlaan 2001; Brandenburg 2012)

Studies show that experiencing art, making art, the reception of art, and being involved in art all have direct effects on health. Painting, dancing, listening to music, playing a musical instrument, singing, telling a story and watching films have been proven to activate sensory functions and to promote the maintenance of flexible brain operations. Brain research shows that the stimulation of both short and long term memories has a significant role in brain well-being and therefore, in our health on the whole. Brain imaging techniques show that new connections between neural networks are created when stimulated with visual, auditory, verbal and kinaesthetic sensory stimuli. Engaging in pleasing and meaningful activities and learning and developing new skills moulds the brain and keeps it fit. (Diamond 2000; Cohen 2006; Muller 2007; Zeki 2010; Malmivirta 2013) Studies shows that art increases the sense of social belonging and participation. This sense of participation and belonging reduces blood pressure and eases stress and, therefore, reduces the need for medication. (Cohen 2006; Hyyppä & Liikanen 2005; Zeki 2009; Liikanen 2010; Lehikoinen 2011)



4. Applying the action research strategy to the development and implementation of the service models

Helena Malmivirta

Four citizen-centric service models were developed in the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project. The development process of each model brought up something new to be considered at the next stage of the research and development work.

John Dewey (1929, 24; Malmivirta 2011, 75) presented the idea of research being closely connected to the everyday activities of human communities. In addition to this, Dewey discussed reflective thinking as the basis of our actions, which is one of the starting points in the action research approach today. In the planning stage of this research and development work, literature related to the topic, previous research as well as other R&D projects were examined. Based on this, several hypotheses on how to activate the brain and promote memory functions with the means of the different arts were drafted. After this stage, four different draft versions of citizen-centric service models were developed, along with frameworks to direct the content of the models. Following this phase, collaboration negotiations with various third-sector operators were held. Once the cooperation partners were secured, the pedagogic plans in the four service models were elaborated, and then tested and enacted in practice.

The service models were tested from 1 March to 27 November 2013 by executing each model in collaboration with the third-sector operators. In practice, the research and development work of each service model included six to nine art interventions. During and after the art interventions, the planners and instructors of the participatory art activities observed the activities of the participants as well as their own activities in relation to the objectives set. Any need for changes was recorded in line with the objectives, and the pedagogic plans were clarified, reworded and, if necessary, changed according to the action research cycles. This way, the research and development work applied the action research strategy in which the main objective is to achieve changes in social activities. At the same time, the results obtained were examined, and changes were made as necessary before beginning the next development cycle. (Jary & Jary 1991, 5; Kemmis & Wilkinson 1998, 21; Kuula 1999, 10–11; Malmivirta 2011, 75)

In this research and development work, which applies the methods of action research, the social and self-reflective research and development approach of action research is realised in that groups in the four service models each make up



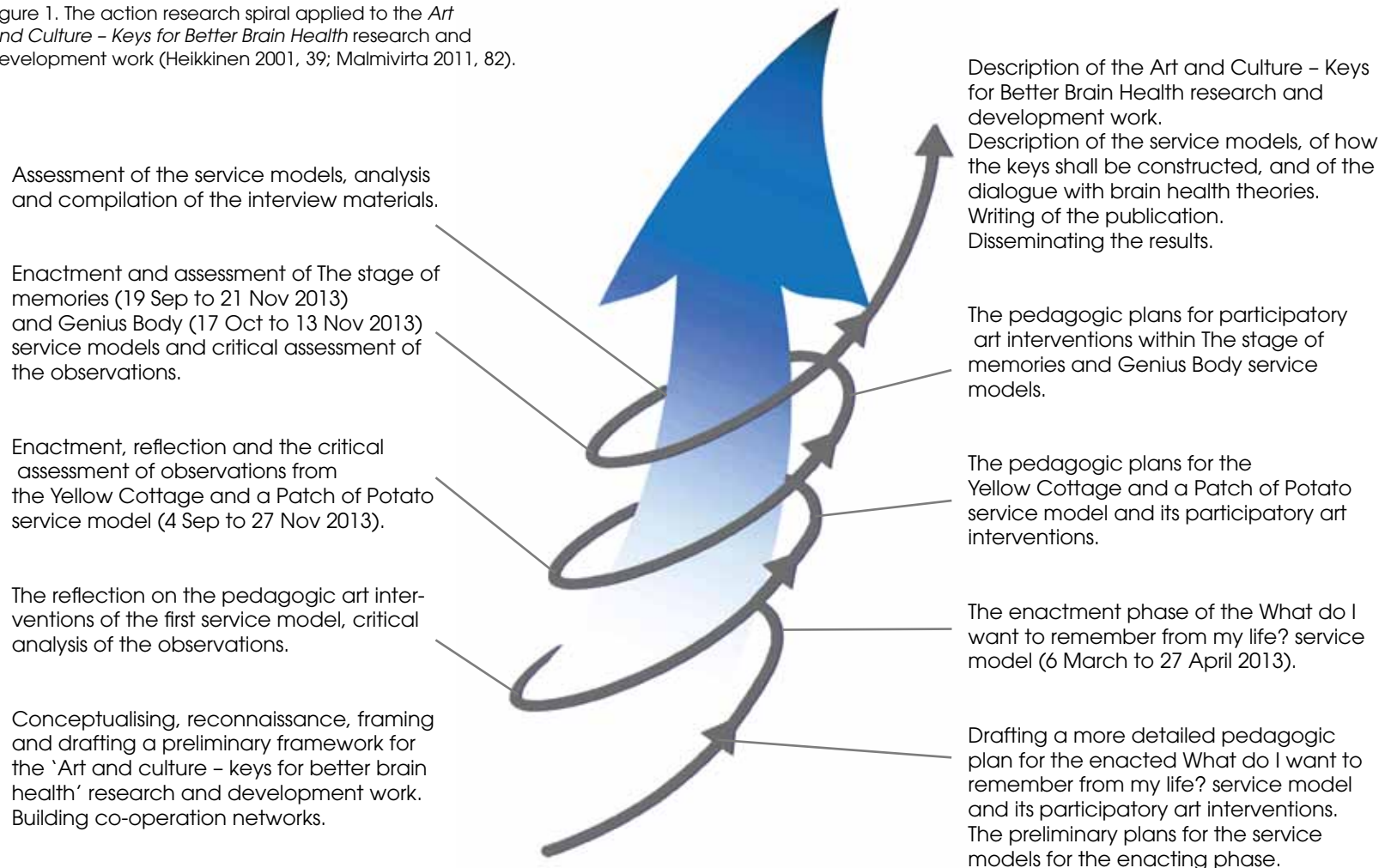
a community of practice. The members of these communities were all committed in their own way to developing the practices of the community in a more fair and sensible direction. At the same time, the project strove to build a better understanding of the means of action and the situations in which the activities took place. Research and development work which aims at developing practices is always involved in practical activities in the everyday reality. It is in this reality that the art activity instructors involved act co-operatively and strive to increase their understanding of the process designed to bring about change during the project. (Kuula 1999, 204–205; Kiviniemi 1999, 66; Malmivirta 2011, 74)

All questions related to this applied research and development work are constructed from the personal knowledge assets of the participants, taking into account their past and present experiences. The personal knowledge of the instructors and the participants is key in the pedagogic planning of the service models as well as in all of the processes of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work. The research and development work takes place in natural conditions in which the experiences arising from the participants' personal history and the theories that guide the activities meet in the concrete development work of the four service models: planning the content, the pedagogic plans and the implementation of the plans. This way, the theories and approaches that guide the practices have value precisely because of their significance in practice. (Connelly & Glandinin 1988, 4, 18–19; Malmivirta 2011, 74) Practical action research that develops practices aims at expressing the thoughts, ideas and inner knowledge of all participants, analysing and organising this tacit knowledge, and becoming aware of it. (Carr & Kemmis 1986, 31–40; Heikkinen 2001, 157–158; Malmivirta 2011, 75) The objective of the art interventions that took place in the natural conditions of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project was to make the participants' thoughts, experiences and tacit knowledge visible with various artistic means. When experiences related to one's personal history are made visible, they will, at the same time, be organised and with the help of reflection, create meaning in life.

4.1. Researching and developing keys to better brain health

The purpose of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work is to develop service models that activate both brain and memory functions as well as to develop the content of these models. Previous research has proven that the conscious instruction and guidance of these processes and goal-oriented art pedagogics can activate brain and memory functions. The process of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work can be depicted with the following figure:

Figure 1. The action research spiral applied to the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work (Heikkinen 2001, 39; Malmivirta 2011, 82).



The *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work is based on the action research strategy that develops best practices and examines existing practices. This way, the research and development work takes the shape of a self-reflective circle, in which the whole process is continuously examined from a holistic perspective. The initial phase of the research and development work focussed on related research and projects, and created draft versions of the four service models to be developed. After this, the art activities within the art interventions of each service model were planned in more detail. During the art activities, all that took place was observed: the actions and participation of the participants, the actions of the instructors, as well as the suitability and usability of the chosen forms, methods and materials of the art activities. Afterwards, the activities that had taken place were reflected upon, after which the pedagogic plans and the plan for the next service model were specified further. The planning and the activities took place in turns in four consecutive cycles. The *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project is here depicted here as a spiral (please see Figure 1) which progresses in time in cycles (Kemmis & Mc Taggart 1988, 5–6; Heikkinen 2001, 139; Malmivirta 2011, 80–82). In the spiral, the development of the four service models is visible in the way the activities and the thinking are linked together in cycles of action, observation, reflection and re-planning (Lewin 1946, 205).

The planning and practical implementation of the four service models in the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project are based on these four concepts:

1. What do I want to remember from my life?
2. Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato (Keltainen tupa ja perunamaa)
3. The stage of memories (Muistojen näyttämö)
4. Genius Body (KehoNero)

Figure 1 depicts the research-based development and the development of the holistic understanding of these service models with four cycles, in each of which we learn something from the previous cycle by genuinely listening to the observations and experiences of the participants. This way, the thinking in each cycle and the reflective thought process of that cycle are both involved in constructing the next cycle. The first cycle, *reconnaissance*, examined the previous research and development projects and research related to the theme and created a framework for the four different service models (*planning*), which meant that the planning of the service model content was started in this cycle. After the reconnaissance phase, the first service model, *What do I want to remember from my life?* was tested in practice, which is described as *enacting*. In this phase, the practical art activities were *observed, monitored* and reflected upon. In addition to this, observational material was gathered (Kemmis 1988; Elliot 1991; Malmivirta 2011, 80). In the following cycles, a new planning phase, examining the new information and based on these, redevelopment of the next service model, Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato, took place. Now it was again time for another phase: developing a new plan and activities for the The stage of memories service model. The last phase was the planning and practical implementation of the *Genius Body* service model, after which all four models had been developed and tested in practice. In the implementation phase of all four service models, new solutions were created to further develop the operations and to ensure that the activities finally came together as cohesive service models. The action plan and the practices were developed to take into consideration and carefully justify the objectives, which meant that that

smaller development cycles constantly took place within the activities. All of this research and development work was guided by the importance of previous experience in learning something new and implementing new plans.

The material produced in the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work is made up from the instructors' observations from the art activities, photographs and video material from the art activities, as well as individual and group interviews based on the narrative method. A narrative (Bruner 1996, 19; Malmivirta 2011, 156) is a method of organising information from a person's life into a coherent story. The narrative begins the moment a person's life begins as an action in a certain place and time, bound to a certain event. We create stories and narratives in our lives by giving them a beginning, a middle and an end. In real life, these events do not necessarily take place in such a clear continuum. Narratives can be understood and examined as depictions of the life lived. (Glandinin & Connelly 2007, 78; Bruner 2002, 17; Malmivirta 2011, 156) A narrative as a model of thought and feeling helps people create different versions of both the world and themselves, making the narrative act as an instrument of the mind in creating meaning (Bruner 1996, 41).

Narrative thinking is shaped with cognitive tools, stories, and metaphors. The format of the narrative in the interviews conducted after the implementation of the service model is the visual stories (described in more detail in Chapter 6) which were created in the practical application of the *What do I want to remember from my life?* service model, i.e. in the processes of the participatory art activities. In the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work, the narrative approach is the process during the art activities in which these visual stories were constructed. Further narrative thinking took place in the participant interviews conducted after the implementation of the *What do I want to remember from my life?* service model. In these interviews, the work of art in front of the participant, related to his personal life and created in the process of the art activities, reopened to be told again. Thinking becomes more profound when retelling the story, and experiences turn into a coherent narrative with clear episodes. In the narrative, this is evident in that there are always new stories behind the pictures and colours that open up during the telling of the story and are given new meanings (Bruner 1986, 92; Malmivirta 2011, 156).

The interviews in the enactment phase of the first service model, *What do I want to remember from my life?* were conducted as individual interviews, while the interviews in the three other enactment phases were conducted as group interviews. Interviews were always held at the end of the enactment phase by Malmivirta and Kivelä. In addition to this, the group participants answered questionnaires both at the beginning and at the end of the enactment phase. The group interview in the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* service model turned out to be rather meagre, and in order to gather sufficient, more informative data, the video material from the last meeting was transcribed. The various pictorial art works and visual stories created in the *Mitä haluan elämästäni muistaa*, *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* and *The stage of memories* service models were examined as narratives: the narratives operated as a means of both organising and obtaining information about the world as well as creating a world. The narrative gives shape to real objects and episodes in life. In addition to this, the narrative works as a model for thinking and feeling in a situation in which the participants create different versions of both the world and themselves. This way, the narrative works as an instrument of the mind for creating meaning, giving narrative thinking a shape with the help of cognitive tools, stories and metaphors (Bruner 1985, 113; 1986, 92).

In this research and development work, the narrative perspective focuses on the pedagogic perspective of narratives emphasising life-long growth processes. The autobiographical visual stories created in the art activities of the first three enactments of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project are visualised stories of significant life experiences to which the participants in the art activities have given a visual form, and the examining of which will allow participants to return to the past experiences as well as the events that have taken place in the process (Bruner 1996, 40; Malmivirta 2011, 156). The participants in the art activities are offered the opportunity to tell their story about their experiences during the activities and about the work of art, the visual story they have created. Additionally, they are offered the possibility to share anything significant they may have experienced during the process and anything new they may have realised during the process or afterwards, when reflecting upon the process. The participants' stories also work as a method in the research and development work for finding out what kinds of keys these enacting activities have produced for activating the brain and promoting memory functions, which, in turn, provides an answer to the question of whether we have been able to develop the right kinds of model specifically for promoting brain health.

4.2. Towards a target-oriented service model approach with pedagogic action

A pedagogically skilled teacher or instructor needs more than just methods or a box full of tricks. Learning and life-long learning as well as activities that genuinely strive for change require profound understanding of the starting points and knowledge base of pedagogics, which, at the same time, creates both theoretical and experience-based understanding to the practical phenomena of teaching, instruction and learning. In practice, the knowledge base is evident in the pedagogic thinking that directs the progression of the activities towards the set goal. Pedagogic thinking has been defined as decision-making concerning teaching and learning, based on the curriculum and its objectives. In the implementation of pedagogics, being aware of one's personal background assumptions and one's commitment to them, making choices to reach the selected goal and justifying one's decision-making, all become visible. (Dewey 1951, 21; 1997, 112; 1960, 4-8; Kansanen 1996, 45-46; Kansanen et al. 2000, 5; Aaltonen 2003; Aaltonen & Eskola-Kronqvist 2013, 40-44; Malmivirta 2011, 263)

During the planning phase of the enactments in the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* project, several discussions were held with the instructors of the service models on how we understand people and the elderly, in particular, as lifelong learners and actors striving holistically toward change. We also discussed how to instruct the participatory art interventions in a way that would consider these aspects.

4.3. From experience-based knowledge to action and art activities in line with John Dewey's philosophy

The life experiences of the participants are at the very heart of the citizen-centric *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work. The objective during the development process of the service models was to create

various kind of spaces with different artistic means and to learn from experience. Another objective was to create situations which provide opportunities for discovering development opportunities related to one's personal experiences, as well to find resources for promoting one's brain health. John Dewey (1859–1952) developed a concept of experience in which a person's ability to learn from his experiences is the key. With this, at the time, brand new concept of human experience, Dewey created the basis for his pragmatist philosophy. (Dewey 1934/1980; 1997; Pihlstöm 2001) The starting point is the concept of an active, functional and essentially value-based human being who, as a cultural being, is attached to his social environment through various practices. With his intellectual problem-solving capacities, he strives to carry out various human endeavours and with that, to survive problematic situations he may encounter. In pragmatism, philosophical concepts and problems are closely connect to practice (Pihlstöm 2001, 14; Malmivirta 2011, 54).

Dewey's (1951, 111–112) progressive pedagogic philosophy strongly emphasises the unity of action and knowledge, as well as thinking and experience. The key is how the individual is able to utilise the growth potential and opportunities of his experience and to use these as resources. The ultimate objective is an emancipated individual who determines his own path. In the life-long growth and learning process, people become critical actors or a community of actors, who, through their actions, realise the moral ideal of democracy (Väkevä 2004, 109–210; Malmivirta 2011, 54). Dewey describes the basic idea behind 'learning by doing' as follows:

The process of each educator should begin with doing something; the practice of a sensory observation, memories, imagination and judgment should grow from the terms and needs of what is done. What is done, then, should not be a random task issued by the taskmaster but something with internal meaning and of a nature that the student appreciates its importance enough in order to adopt a living interest towards it. (Dewey MW 4, 185; Väkevä 2004, 111)

The central idea in Dewey's pragmatist, 'learning by doing' pedagogics, which emphasises experience, is the thought of learning by doing and acting. The learning by doing approach emphasises the learner's or actor's activity as the constructor of knowledge, as well as the connection of the new knowledge to his personal life history and practices in his personal life. In the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work, the conception of learning that guides the pedagogic activities is linked to Dewey's thinking on experimental and art learning. In planning the activities, particular attention is paid to each participant's lifeworld, the primary and secondary experiences from the course of their life being used as the source of knowledge.

According to Dewey (MW 4, 185; Väkevä 2004, 111; Malmivirta 2011, 54) learning by doing must take place in relation to testing ideas, executing a project or making something necessary for the purposes of the task at hand. Dewey was primarily interested in understanding the relationship between theory and praxis and in the ways of understanding practice as intellectually productive. In the *process of the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project, the suitability of the different fields, methods, materials and tools of art and culture for activating the brain and promoting memory functions as well for bringing forth a new kind of idea were tested. The objective was to make visible, and explicit,

the way in which background theories meet the four service models in the practical research and development work and what new information this encounter has created. The experiences of the participants in the art activities are vital in finding out the kind of 'keys' for memory and brain activation that can be developed in this particular research and development project.

For Dewey, the basis for reflective learning lies in solving, with experimental activities, problem situations that have risen from breaking conventional modes of action. The connecting foundation is our activities in life and solving problems within these activities (Miettinen 1998, 87). Experiences are grouped into two categories: primary and secondary experiences. A primary experience refers to concrete actions and interaction with the environment. Concrete artefacts are described as being more the objects of processing, using, doing, pleasure and suffering than objects of knowledge (Dewey 1958, 21). They are unconscious objects which we are unaware of in human action. Secondary experience refers to the reflective experience which shapes the environment and the objects in it as objects of knowing and awareness. The uncertainty that grows from primary actions and interruptions is the basis for reflective thought. (Miettinen 1998, 90; Malmivirta 2011, 56)

The course of Dewey's reflective thought and research process and their basic characteristics can be examined with the following (Miettinen 1998, 90–92; Malmivirta 2011, 56–60) figure:

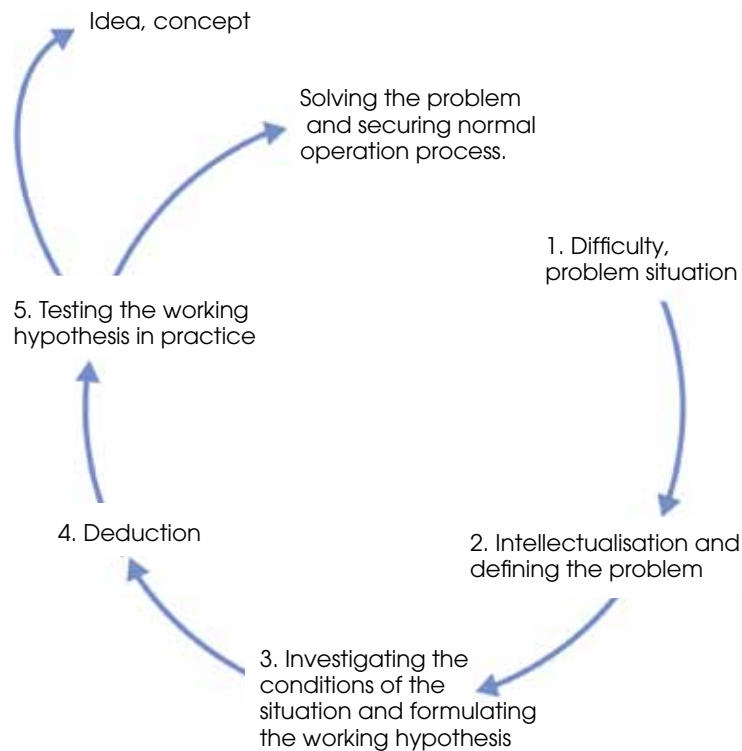


Figure 2. The basic characteristics of Dewey's reflective thinking and research (Miettinen 1998, 90–92; Malmivirta 2011, 56–60).

In the first phase, the problem situation, which is non-reflective, uncertain and uncontrollable, is encountered. In the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project, the development processes of all four service models contained, in the small and large cycles, for both the instructors and the participants, places of uncertainty, difficulty and perhaps even uncontrollability, when the participants had to confront past experiences in a whole new context. In the second phase, these difficulties are intellectualised and problems defined. The participant examines the terms of the situation at hand and defines the problem. The definition of the problem is an important phase which will secure the progression of the thought process. In the development work, this phase could be characterised by the development of the entire process as well as the setting of goals. Each member of the group went through the same process every time they planned their personal process at the beginning of the art activities, which partially takes place in the third phase, examining the conditions of the situation and drafting a working hypothesis. The

fourth phase, deduction, is made up of processing the meaning of the ideas in relation to each other. In this deduction phase, the working hypothesis is tested with thought experiments using previous theoretical knowledge, experience and tools. In the different phases of the processes in the art activities within the four service models, we observed the way in which the art-pedagogic, target-oriented plans worked in practice. Based on the observations, we changed and specified the plans after each meeting session. At times, practical activities were also specified during the activities. For the participants, this phase was visible as constant experimentation and decision-making in their activities. These phases may not follow each other systematically, but can overlap in the form of continuous testing – in trying out the working hypothesis in practice (Phase 5). When the hypothesis is tested, deductive thinking takes place at the same time. However, thought alone is not sufficient; we also need external, physical acts. In testing the hypotheses in practice, art and culture artefacts are used to enable using art and culture of different formats to work as tools for thought. (Dewey 1916/1966, 14; Miettinen 1998, 91; Malmivirta 2011, 58)

4.4. The agora in art education

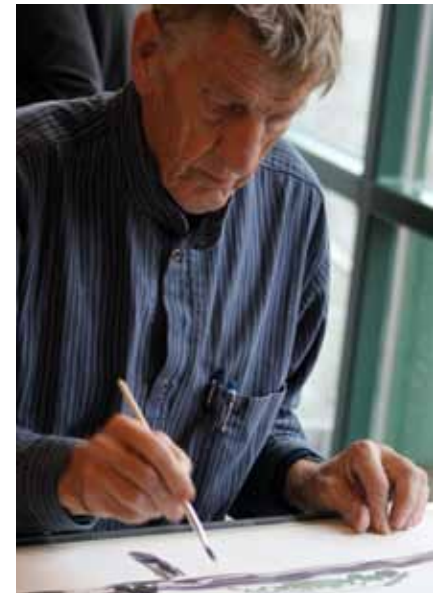
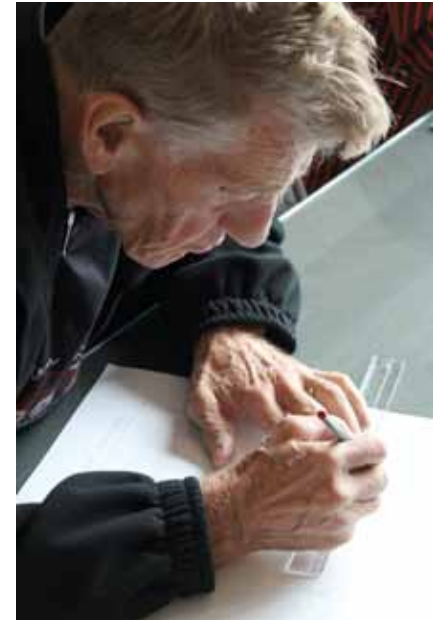
A step towards creativity is taken when one feels his will and its counterforce fight deep inside him.
(Uusikylä 2003, 74; Sava 2007)

The *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work is linked, for its part, to a political welfare reform by creating an agora, a space and place for participation, doing things together, learning something new, learning how to enhance one's well-being and to promote brain health and memory functions by means of art and culture. The interventions of preventive emotional social and health care work will remain ineffective if they do not promote the individual's capability to live life in a reflective way, in which they can describe their life and truly understand their role as an actor and experienter. (Bardy & Känkänen 2005)

These service models that promote brain health and memory functions were designed to encourage the participants in their life-long exploration of the relationship between the self and the world. At the same time, we continuously paid attention in the art-making processes to how visual perception, visual thinking and reflective thought are present in the making of autobiographical art. The planning and implementation of the art-making processes strive to create the space and tools for empowerment via the means of art and culture, for the courage to grow from an object of action to a subject and experienter as well as an actor responsible for cherishing one's health. This way, the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work is connected not only to postmodern art education and art, but also to a constructive art pedagogic approach. (Malmivirta 2011, 263)

Following the philosophy of lifelong learning, art education means enabling sensing and seeing in a lifelong growth process. In addition to this, art education means taking into account the ways in which art, in its various forms, can operate as a tool of enlightenment, or in revealing personal life experiences or functions of society. Greene (1995, 274–287; Sava 2007, 107) notes that matters are not revealed of their own accord, but everything must first be placed under the right light in order to





be seen. In postmodern art education, the focus is on self-directed learning; an individual who consciously chooses those values they feels are important to them. Self-direction requires a reflective approach to reality. Reflection strives at making visible something that was not visible before. Reflection allows you to face your feelings, the cause and effect relations of actions, personal values, usage of concepts and their meanings, thought and deduction, understanding and awareness, as well as the critical examination of beliefs and assumptions. At best, a reflective learning process can affect your entire personality. Reflecting upon experiences in one's personal history in the participatory art activities of the service models may lead to change, both in the sphere of art and in the participants' lives. Reflection in art activities may cause changes in the way the participants relate to their lives, the self, or culture. (Malmivirta 2011, 217)

The instructor of the art activities operates in the role of an art educator in supporting life-long human growth. The instructors create, using art, diverse situations with increasing depth, in which the group can examine their personal life histories. The art activities are directed in a way that enables brain and memory activation in the processes of seeing and observation. The instructors act as art educators in creating spaces, which may lead to moments of enlightenment in the examination of one's personal life course. In art activities that apply pragmatist art pedagogics (Dewey MW 4, 185; Malmivirta 2011, 262), the participants may explore their lifeworlds, their human and historical worlds, which become apparent from their experiences. The underlying assumption is that they can transcend their conventional boundaries and construct something new in relation to their personal history, with the help of art activities that deconstruct and clarify meaning. The activities are guided by the concept of an active, functional and value-oriented human being who, as a cultural being who attaches themselves to their conduct of life through various different practices, strives with their intellectual problem-solving abilities to execute various human endeavours and overcome challenging situations. The key elements in planning and implementing the art activities are the emphasis on the actors' activity as well as attaching the matter to be examined to the conduct of life of the actor, in which case conduct is understood as intellectually productive action.

The existential-phenomenologist approach sees human beings as individuals who make choices and therefore create the actions for their personal growth and their living environment and strive, with their actions, to give meaning to their lives. This way, human beings exists through their choices and their self-awareness. This idea, also known as the holistic concept of man (Rauhala 1983, 1989; 2009; Malmivirta 2011), proposes that human beings become real as holistic entities via three different modes of existence. *Corporeality* emphasises organic events of human existence. *Consciousness* emphasises existence as a psychological and mental experience of varying qualities and grades. *Situationality* emphasises the way existence is related to one's life situation. In the dimension of consciousness, the psychological and mental layers of the mind (*noema*) are manifested and exist in an insightful way. In this process, art and art activities play a significant role. Art touches the mind, and art is not only about the production of performances and works of art. It is also a means of building or creating life by expanding the consciousness, by shaping new perspectives, constructing meaning, creating and establishing social interaction with others and sharing a common culture. (Rauhala 2007, 97; Eisner 2002, 3; Bateson 1987, 128–156; Bardy 1998, 53; Malmivirta 2011, 76–77)

4.5. Sociocultural thinking in the instruction of art activities within the service models

Sociocultural learning practices stress the connection between individual achievements, interpersonal relations and cultural activities (Säljö 2001, 19). When the art activities in this research and development project connect with lifelong learning and the process of lifelong human growth, the personal level should always be considered alongside stressing the cultural context. In this context, the personal level refers to taking a person's cognitions, emotions, behaviour, values and beliefs into account in the planning and implementation of the activities. (Rueda et al. 2000, 75; Kupila 2007, 24; Malmivirta 2011, 146) The objective is that the members of the group all commit to the target-oriented activities, its purpose and goal, supported by their internal motivation, despite the open and perhaps vague nature of the activities, right until the very end. In the shared activities, the participants have the chance to learn and adopt the methods used in the art activities as well as to continuously acquire the skills and knowledge needed for making their experiences visible. Therefore, the process can be described as a lifelong reflective process of learning that is lived through thinking, acting and learning something new, together. In shared activities, emotions are very important. The planning pays special attention to making the participants' previous life experiences, previous knowledge and experiences, the starting point of all actions. This brings us close to the main objective of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* project: to move the different layers of the memory and at the same time, to activate brain and memory functions.

In sociocultural activities, work takes place in various everyday contexts by using the cultural tools of the members of that culture (Vygotsky 1981; Säljö 2001; Malmivirta 2011, 254). According to Vygotsky (1981, 137), people use two kinds of cultural tools for social interaction: technical tools and psychological tools, such as words and concepts. Counting systems, mnemonics, works of art, writing, plans and established signs, such as icons, symbols, codes and non-linguistic signs and gestures, are examples of psychological tools which get things done and heard. Cultural tools are connected to sociocultural activities as well (Peavy 2002, 35–36; Malmivirta 2011, 255):

- non-verbal language in which all expression acts as a means for improving the understanding between the parties in a conversation
- communication which is dialogic and takes place on the borders of the self and the other (please see Bakhtin 191, 293)
- cultural tools (such as different art forms and methods, narrative forms) as tools for mapping one's life space, which helps to transform the implicit, unexpressed and uncoordinated into something explicit, expressed and coordinated
- cultural tools as means of reflection, which connects personal and social processes to each other (such as different art forms and methods, narrative forms)
- cultural tools as means of metaphor for creating new tools (such as different art forms and methods, art as symbol and metaphor, narrative forms)
- cultural tools as visualised scenarios and tools for preparing for action which strives at obtaining information.



The art in the service models during the enacting phase of the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work functioned as a non-verbal language which was used as a tool for understanding one's life and the important elements in one's life story. The participatory art activities in the enacting phase create, with the means of art, situations in which a genuine dialogue on the borders of the self and the other takes place. Target-oriented art activities provide an opportunity to map one's life history and all its events, with the purpose of transforming the expressions of primary and secondary experiences from tacit knowledge into something explicit, expressed and organised, all with the language of art. This way, the language of art functions as a tool for reflection which is used to organise personal and social processes with each other, which also enables art to function as a metaphor-like tool for creating something new. The starting point for the planning of the entire Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work has been an understanding of art and culture in their different forms creating new kinds of cultural tools – keys, as they are called here – for promoting brain health and memory functions.

Putting this philosophy into practice requires that the instructors understand and fully grasp the basic idea behind the sociocultural learning practice. According to Kurki (2007, 7, 9–14; Malmivirta 2011, 25–257), sociocultural animation is entwined with cultural democratisation and cultural democracy. Cultural democratisation aims at achieving cultural discourse. In the enactment phase, the instructors mediate this animation for the group but also act as mediators between art and the participants in the group that commit to art.

The objective of the art activities is to expand the concept of art by creating spaces in which traditional products of cultural activities, such as visual arts, photographs, literature, dance and music, can be appreciated. In addition to this, the instructors act in the spirit of cultural democracy. They strive to act as sociocultural animators and kinds of catalysts: they stir the participants' interest in art as a promotor of brain health and activator of memory functions, and act in a way that enables the empowerment of the participants, so

that they begin to care for their brain health with of artistic and cultural means. The objective is to increase activities in which the members can truly become participants, actors with a sense of agency, and the producers of their personal culture. Accepting cultural activities means that culture is seen as a central aspect of the structure and functions of human behaviour.

Sociocultural animation is always based on conscious planning and target-oriented activities. In this sense, the cultural activities of animation pursue the development of creativity and diverse expression, and the different spheres of art are emphasised in the activities. Animation concerns all areas of life, bringing together all factors related to an individual's lifelong growth and development process. Sense of community, participation, sensibilisation, striving towards a genuine dialogue, creativity, and commitment to the activities are key factors in sociocultural animation. The activities committed to art and culture strive to achieve these elements. (Please see Kurki 2000, 14; Malmivirta 2011, 256)

In the planning phase of the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health activities, the areas of art represented were visual arts in different forms and methods, photographs of environmental architecture owned by the participant or related to their lives, personal stories, paper theatre and dance. The social dimension of sociocultural animation focusses on the group and promoting the functioning of the group, the integration of the group into society via their personal input in the activities. In this research and development project, the target-oriented art activities pursue something that is at the very core of all human beings, personality and their development; change in attitudes; development of critical thinking; being aware of one's personal responsibility; sensibilisation; as well as invoking and reinforcing the participants' motivation for caring for their brain health. (Kurki 2000, 44, 46–47) With this approach, an active participant and actor can operate positively and strive to change the course of their life. This challenges the participants to move from a self-centred approach towards a dialogue between the self and the world. The objective of emancipation is therefore to encourage the participants to take responsibility for their brain health and activating their memory functions.



5. The tasks of the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work

Helena Malmivirta

The tasks of the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work are

- a. planning and enacting four different service models within in the framework of art and culture by applying the practical and emancipatory action research strategy
- b. describing the keys for promoting brain health and memory functions developed in the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health enactments.

This section describes the four service models in the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* project, developed on the basis of extensive background research, as well as their implementation and assessment processes. The implementation of each service model is discussed further in the following chapters.

The planning of the citizen-centric service models begun in autumn 2012, initiated by Helena Malmivirta, with the creation of a preliminary framework for the four service models and preliminary discussions with future co-operation partners. These collaborative negotiations continued late in the autumn, now with Suvi Kivelä also attending. The planning and implementation of the first enactment was agreed upon with Hanne-Maarit Suokas from Southwest Finland memory association Varsinais-Suomen Muistiyhdistys ry and with Minna Rosendahl from memory specialist organisation Varsinais-Suomen ja Satakunnan Muistiluotsi. The cooperation negotiations concerning the second enactment, Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato, were held with Laura Luostarinen and Pirjo Juusela from Salo art museum Salon taidemuseo as well as with artist Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro from Salon Taitelijaseura ry. The negotiations for the implementation of the third enactment were held with Tiina Puranen from the RahtiTeatteri theatre. The implementation negotiations for the fourth enactment were held with producer Riikka Campomanes from the Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland and dance artist Jonna Aaltonen.

The criteria for selecting the actors and artists from the third sector as co-operation partners was previous experience with participatory art activities among the elderly or with the elderly as a part of the artist's work. According to their objectives and agenda, Muistiyhdistys and Muistiluotsi work with issues related to memory and were therefore natural candidates as co-operation partners. Artist Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro, puppet theatre artist Tiina Puranen and dance artist Jonna Aaltonen from Salon Taitelijaseura all have previous sound experience of development work within services for the elderly. They have

created methods for increasing and reinforcing well-being and sense of significance without compromising their standards of high quality art (Varto 2011). They showed interest in the research and development project aimed at people in the third age, combining art with promoting brain health.

As a result of the background research and collaborative planning, creating and piloting new kinds of citizen-centric service models was set as the objective of the TEHU project in the Turku region. These service models that promote brain health and memory functions will be, once they have been completed, available to the third sector for complementing public services. The development actions are directed at citizens in the 65–75 age group who are interested in brain health and memory activation. During the research and development activities, the purpose was to create four service models to promote brain health and memory functions to complement the services offered by the public sector. The development of the service models was executed with the following themes:

1. What do I want to remember from my life? (Mitä haluan elämästäni muistaa)

The objective was to create illustrated stories of significant life experiences and memories by utilising the customer's personal childhood photographs, stories and means of visual arts, while at the same time activating brain and memory functions.



2. Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato (Keltainen tupa ja perunamaa)

The objective was to activate brain and memory functions by studying the architecture of the childhood home and environment with the means of photographs, personal stories and visual arts.



3. The stage of memories (Muistojen näyttämö)

Here, the objective was to activate brain and memory functions with the help of old photographs, magazines and other visual material that were important to the participants, as well as with the means of paper theatre.



4. Genius Body (KehoNero)

The objective was to activate brain and memory functions with the help of creative movement and self-expression exercises by moving, dancing, observing, listening, meeting and encouraging the participants to discover something new and to do things differently.









WHAT DO I WANT TO REMEMBER FROM MY LIFE

6. What do I want to remember from my life?

Helena Malmivirta

Helena Malmivirta, Hanne-Maarit Suokas and Suvi Kivelä worked as the instructors of the group.

In the What do I want to remember from my life? enactment, important life experiences are transformed into illustrated, visual stories, by using childhood photographs, stories and visual arts methods. In the participatory art activities, the customers' brain and memory functions are activated by returning from the present moment to childhood and the atmosphere of childhood photographs silently, by listening to your own memories. Memories are then shared with the other participants. With the means of visual arts, the stories become visible to the participants themselves as well as to the others in the group.

The first service model was named *What do I want to remember from my life?* In order to achieve these objectives, a detailed pedagogic plan was drafted. However, the plan was kept open enough to allow continuous development and change during the process as necessary. The group participants had received information about the coming activities from a newspaper as well as the staff of Muistiyhdistys ry and Kotikunnas ry. In addition to this, the participants received information from the local associations of the Martha Organization as well as from their friends. Finally, six active 65–75-year-old women, who were interested in activating their memory, joined the group. Later on, one of the members had to leave the group for personal reasons.

The eight meetings (6 March to 27 April 2013) proceeded according to the pedagogic plan. Whenever necessary, the group stopped to examine the themes in more detail, always observing the activities of the other participants and listening to them, in order to enable a genuine dialogue. The objective of all of the meeting sessions was to activate the visual and linguistic areas of the brain with the means of arts and narrative. During each meeting, the group shared experiences from the past week as well as any observations of the awakening spring nature. A weekly diary was used to activate the members to observe their environment and the surrounding events as well as to examine the moments they would pause to think. With the help of the diary, the participants practiced seeing and discerning the significant elements from the continuous flux of perceptions caused by the activity of the eyes and the brain. In this approach, the eye reaches something new and significant from all that surrounds us. (Arnheim 1974, 1, 5; Malmivirta 2011, 221) Recording observations in a diary turned out to be a very good method. With this method, the weekly meetings became a continuum which increased the group's attention and observations. Various intermediate homework tasks were given to maintain this continuum, such as finding personal photographs and personally significant works of art. These intermediate tasks, too, played their part in interesting the participants even more in art and nature.



*That feeling of spring in
your heart, the first sight-
ings of willow catkins,
more and more light,
birdsong, icicles, melting
snow, the first coltsfoot,
a twinkle in your eye,
waking from hibernation.
(Participant no. 3)*

*I sat on the rock, enjoyed
the sun, had some vita-
min D. Blackbirds sing in
the night, they are hav-
ing their spring season.
Nature is going at full
throttle. (Participant no. 1)*

6.1. Experiencing, watching and making art

At the beginning of each meeting, the group examined a work of visual art in order to stir their interest in art. The idea was to consciously clear the room for the reception and experiencing of the particular work of art. When examining the art work, the participants had the chance to create their own experience of art. For the first sessions, works of art by the Dutch painter Jan Vermeer (1632–1675) were selected, inspired by Zeki's work *Inner Vision: An Exploration of Art and the Brain* (1999). Zeki examined these pieces in connection with the link between the visual cortex of the brain and visual arts. According to Zeki (1999, 1–2), all visual art is the product of brain activity, and therefore, aesthetic theories should be based on the cognitive processes of the brain. Zeki is interested in the biological processes behind the aesthetic observation and talks of neuroaesthetics in this context. (Please see Malmivirta 2013) One active observer wrote this in her diary:

We looked at paintings again. This time we looked at a painting by a Dutch artist, Vermeer I think, called 'The Music Lesson'. The strange thing was that a rug had been lifted onto the table as if it were a table cloth. The painting was extremely detailed. The girl in the painting has turned her back toward the viewer, but you can see her bust from the mirror. The teacher stands next to the instrument, a 'piano' from the 17th century. There is a cello lying on the floor, the mood is formal and organised. (Participant no. 1)

We see in order to obtain information about the world. Seeing is perceiving the world with colours, shapes, surfaces and structures. However, seeing is not the only means of getting information about the surrounding world. We see the surrounding world in a constantly changing flux of perceptions; from different directions and distances, in different circumstances, when light and shadow change what we perceive. This way, seeing is an active process, in which observation of details and separating unessential information from essential information constantly takes place in conceptualising the bigger picture. The object of the visual examination is compared to past observations stored in the memory, and the new perception is organised and analysed with the help of our previous knowledge. (Zeki 1999, 5–6) Zeki refers to the artist Henri Matisse (1972), according to whom seeing is a creative process which requires active aspirations from the viewer.

Following this line of thinking, a work of art is the result of the functioning of the visual area of the artist's brain, which the viewer then constructs in its final form with personal perceptions of the colours, shapes and rhythm in the work of art.



The beginning of the reception and experiencing of art is always unknown, before memory attaches the new experience to previous experiences. When perceiving a picture or a work of art, the memory storages of the brain are in active motion. In addition to this, relationships related to the artist's world of experiences are present in this event of perception, conception and creation. The viewer, too, has to organise the components of the entire work of art in much the same way as the artist has done when painting the piece. If the viewer does not recreate the work of art, they will not perceive it as a work of art. When creating and painting the work of art, the artist has selected colours, simplified forms, clarified the whole, and cut down and compacted their experience in just the way they wanted. The viewer must go through the same procedure from their perspective, according to their preferences and experiences. Both the artist of a work of art as well as its audience strive to locate and understand meaning. Therefore, it is worth while to truly pause in front of the works of art and let the brain work: look, perceive and see. (Zeki 1999; Dewey 1934/1980; 2010; Malmivirta 2011; 2013)

In the sociocultural learning approach (Säljö 2004, 18-19; please see Vygotsky 1934/1986), tools refer to both linguistic and physical means with which we understand our environment and our actions in it. Learning something new is closely tied to the context in which the







new information is learned and used. In the next phase, the participants in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* group were given a tour of the world of painting surfaces, acrylic paints and brushes. The task was to express the most significant childhood memories with colours and make them explicit, visible to the self as well as others. Furthermore, one objective was to introduce the group to the fascinating world of colour: to experiment, to mix colours, to discover new shades and hues by combining and retinting primary colours. The participants became very enthusiastic about exploring colours; they tested them, observed the results and, once a colour ran out, started a new colour experiment. The space served temporarily as a colour laboratory. These means, instruments and tools were used to construct knowledge and information. Colours were mixed to find just the right shade. The participants tried painting, first on paper, and finally on a splined canvas. At first, the group did not use much colour, but during the next session, when they were more familiar with the colours and using the brush, the canvases were covered with more and thicker layers.

PHOTOGRAPHS INVOKING THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MEMORY

In the next phase of the visual narratives, the objective was to take the participants' minds back to their childhood events with the help of personal childhood photographs. The group members were asked to bring important childhood photos to the next meeting sessions. The photographs were then copied and enlarged according to each member's wishes for the next phase of the visual narrative. The purpose of searching for the photographs was to enhance the process of active perception and to activate the memory between the weekly group meetings too. In the visual narrative, pictorial and linguistic expressions appear as parallel means of story telling that support and complement each other. The metaphor-like expression of the visual narratives does not necessarily call for a plot; the visual narrative works as such, as one form of story-telling. This story-telling method seeks something that does not yet exist or is not known at the beginning of the art activities. Illustrated stories and narratives make visible issues and events that are hidden, implicit, and lacking in visible format (Sava 2004, 32). The photograph in itself and processing it build a bridge to the self and the personal history. At the same time, the photograph has a clear connection to reality, due to its representative nature. (Bardy & Känkänen 2005, 83; Malmivirta 2011, 179)

The autobiographical memory contains past events, tied to a certain time and place. Remembering your past is said to have great significance for the self. (Sandström 2010, 114–115)

In autobiographical work, personal photographs have two kinds of roles: they can be viewed as evidence of the personal life and the self, as mirrors of the life lived, or as a possibility for another kind of reality. In mental time travel, the sensory details and emotions connected to the events are very important. Personal childhood photographs bring personal childhood stories to life, making the connection between the image and remembering very strong. The photographs and the related stories capture, in addition to the meanings given by the participant, the past place, time and culture specific to the private experience.

The photographs brought in by the group were very small, and it was difficult to discern the details. Once the photos were enlarged, their diversity and details become more visible. The framed, silent and multifaceted story in the photograph encapsulates a narrative tied to its owner's past and present, which creates a storm of meaning in the viewer. When examining the photographs, the participants shared the stories hidden in them. As a result, the participants discovered similar, even difficult experiences in their past, such as war-time memories of losing one's home or difficulties in attaching oneself to a new home. When looking at a photograph, the detailed images bring back pieces





and memories which may evoke recollections that are not visible in the photograph as such. (Mäkiranta 2008, 25; Salo 2009, 23; Malmivirta 2011, 180–181)

Examining the photographs is connected to photography therapy and its methods, in which sight, visual aspects, memory, emotions and experiences are central (Halkola 2009, 50). Photographs have been called mirrors with a memory (Salo 2009, 23). A photograph has the ability to retain an image which has been hidden from the photographer's minds by vanishing or blackening, until the moment of viewing. Photographs have constructed a place for both the historical and individual memories. Individual photographs bring to the mind of the viewer details and memories, which are not clearly presented in them. It is possible to anchor the photographs and the way they are processed to the self and to one's personal life history (Bardy & Känkänen 2005, 83). Photographs can be determined according to the emotions they cause, or their functionality, as studium and punctum photographs (Halkola 2009, 56). The studium photographs are, by nature, more general and less significant to the viewer. The punctum photographs, however, are the photos with which the viewer has a personal relationship: they contain a detail or element that punctures the viewer like an arrow. Photographs enable an emotional connection with significant events in one's life. (Halkola 2009, 56; Barthes 1984; Malmivirta 2011, 182) The group participants examined and slow-read the photographs continuously. This process was further reinforced by highlighting significant details with pastel colours. Details of clothing and colours, shapes of buildings, natural shapes, and facial features of familiar people were recollected from the memory.





In the next phase of processing the visual narratives, the selected photographs were attached to a painted canvas with the decoupage technique. The photographs highlighted with pastels found their place on the canvas, and at the same time, the stories hidden in the photographs started to become visible to the owner of the photographs as well as to the other group members. Images and language were combined to construct a visual narrative of childhood memories.

The visual life story, brought alive and made visible by art, is reflected back for its author to see. In the process, the maker of art leaves a piece of themselves in the world, and experiences themselves by looking at the piece they left and compares this piece to themselves.

They see themselves from the outside: pausing to listen to each story and story-teller.

Painting as a form of art is often described as the art of memory. Creating an image gives time to think and to go back in time, into the past.



Art touches the mind and moves the layers of the mind, activating the stored experiences both from a psychological and spiritual plane. The experiences at the level of psyche are transferred to the spiritual plane (Rauhala 2007). In accordance with the objectives of the *Art and Culture - Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project, memory functions are activated in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* enactment with memories evoked by childhood photographs when they are processed using visual arts. Creating a visual narrative requires constantly making personal choices, deduction, designing the placement of the photographs, selecting colours, framing, learning new techniques and solving any problems that may come along in the process. Additionally, issues and emotions are processed in the visual work. While engaged in visual work, we feel; see when we look, and hear when we listen. The hand moves the brush. The eye follows and observes the movement of the hand and the visual mark left by these movements. (Dewey 2010, 67) The painting and drawing materials transform life experiences into something visible and thereby provide access to moments lost. Working with art creates time and a space, enabling us to encounter and discover new things through genuine presence. The art activities generated experiences of distance, space, bridges and gaps and something, in which the participants could stop and rest for a while. Examining childhood photographs and using art techniques and tools were used to build a bridge to a significant moment in the past, which defined past experiences more clearly. (Varto 2001, 69;

Malmivirta 2011, 190)



AT AN ART EXHIBITION

Halfway through the process, the participants visited the art museum. At this time, they already knew each other and had personal experiences of making art. The group was very interested in Tuula Lehtinen's exhibition 'Kauneudesta' ('On beauty'), in which various techniques were combined. In addition to this, the theme suited the themes processed in the group. The Wäinö Aaltonen Museum of Art served as an intimate venue for experiencing art.

The Finlandia series was fantastic, combining photographs, paintings and Russian residence permits. Lots of colours and flowers. It was wonderful to look at them and just enjoy the beauty... I really enjoyed the exhibition with passion and felt the tranquil atmosphere. The peaceful feeling stayed with me for the rest of the day. The message of the exhibition really hit home. (Participant no. 3)

The group members felt that the exhibition was interesting, because Lehtinen, too, had processed her personal history with the means of art. They stopped in front of the pieces, constructing them in their minds, making out rhythms and colours and narratives contained within the works of art. They stepped closer and then further away, zoomed in and then distanced their gaze. Inspired by their own art and art experiences, the group members now also had the competence to examine the techniques used by Lehtinen. They discussed the works of art with each other and paused to look at the pieces, as if listening to the stories they could tell. According to the group, the art exhibition opened up to them on more levels, as they now had personal experience of making art. When the participants revisited their previous art experiences, they recreated the works of art in the exhibition in the experiencing and reception process of the pieces: the works of art were reflected in the participants' personal world of experiences. Based on the exhibition and the experiences it evoked, art did not shut away into a world of its own. The group members stopped in front of the works of art to examine their messages, rhythm, lines, colours, and shapes. Because the group members had already become familiar with art techniques similar to those Tuula Lehtinen had used, they found something significant in the works of art in the exhibition. In addition to this, the works of art were autobiographical in the same way as the pieces made by the group members were. Because the group had previous experiences of making art, they were able to







actively engage with the works of art. Dewey (2010, 30) describes this active event of interaction as budding art. At its best, this process of making art means the perfect fusion of the self and the objects and events of the world. Our participants were able to reach that delightful way of perception, the aesthetic experience, described by Dewey. In this approach, seeing and perceiving become more than simply recognising what we see.

Now, the making of the visual narrative continued on the canvas painted at the beginning of the enactment project. The participants had to choose one significant photograph from their personal photos, which was then enlarged to A4 size and copied onto a transparency film. This method once again made visible issues important to the participants, hidden in the photographs. Attaching the transparency film copy onto the painted canvas first distanced and then brought closer whatever was depicted in the photograph. After intensive examination and observation, the participants quieted down:

Oh, is that what I looked like, I've never really seen myself in photos, to see what I look like. And that one, that's what mother looked like. Yes, mother is in the cloud... Or sitting on a cloud. (Participant no. 5).

Well, about the exhibition. By that Tuula Lehtinen. Yeah. Well... She had used some lace and... Yes, I kind of realised that that's it, I will take that with me. (Participant no. 4).

At the beginning of the process of creating the visual narratives, when painting the canvases, some paint that could not be put back into the bottles would always remain on the paper plates used for mixing the paint. We saved all of these plates, on which thick, multi-coloured, three-dimensional paint layers had accumulated. In one of the last meeting sessions, one task was to find bits and elements the participants liked in these three-dimensional surfaces filled with colour. The purpose of this small exercise was to consciously focus on minute details, to make selections and decisions, in order to discover which little square would feel the most 'me' for each of the participant. This square was cut out of the paper plate and decorated with imitation metal leafs to enrich the aesthetic experience. Once the square was complete, it was attached to thick watercolour paper, which transformed it into a miniature work of art. Surprisingly, this little exercise in making art became significant. The participants took the remaining bits and pieces of paper plates and the imitation metal leafs home and turned them into post-cards to send to their friends. Small is beautiful.



SOCIOCULTURAL PARTICIPATORY ACTIVITIES

The process of making art was very intense in all the meeting sessions, and all participants really concentrated on the work of art they were making. At the beginning of each session, the works of art presented set the pace and opened up discussion. During the art activity process, the members would stop to look at each other's creations, which resulted in a natural and easy sharing of experiences. The participants shared their experiences about making art and its challenges as well as their childhood experiences. In sociocultural learning practices, learning takes place precisely in interpersonal activities in which the significance of dialogue and building a common knowledge are emphasised. A dialogic relationship is possible only if we transcend our individuality, direct ourselves towards each other, and let others be exactly what they are. During the art activities, the group members would stop by each others' works of art. They exchanged experiences of the methods they had used as well as the memories the activities brought up. In the reflection on the experiences and the discovery of new insights, a common space, a kind of interspace, was co-created between the parties. (Buber 1962; Värrä 2004; Malmivirta 2011, 273) The reciprocity experienced in these encounters allowed the shared event to be lived from the perspective of the other party too. The immediate reciprocity of the you and I in the dialogue can only be realised if we refrain from using the other person as a means or tool for attaining our personal goals. The sociocultural learning practice also highlights the collective process of thinking, which takes place between and inside people (Säljö 2004, 108). Mediating and receiving meaning according to certain rules, as well as thinking aloud together, are what keep the discourse and dialogue together.

During the last session of the participatory art activities, before the final celebration and the exhibition, we discussed the art works of all of the participants, their creation process and things they had brought to the surface. Everyone had the chance to say what they wanted. This group-sharing phase, the simultaneous viewing of all visual narratives, seemed to be particularly important for the group. The discussion evolved around the life lived, the significant events and emotions in life. Sava (2007, 108–109) compares art to dreams, in which you can transform repressed and archaic emotions and thoughts into a perceptible, visual format, into images that are safe to examine. According to Bardy and Känkänen (2005, 42–43; Malmivirta 2011, 205), you cannot access the life lived with information only, but you need a flux of stories to do that. Social intercourse becomes meaningful when we reach that which goes on in the mind.

The visual narratives constructed in the art activities, anchored into the participants' childhood (Malmivirta 2011, 210), allowed the participants to return to their childhood. Making art opened up a door to the past. During the process, we strived to create a peaceful environment as well as provide good tools and materials for the art activities. The group members were committed to their work because of their internal motivation, which ensured a certain peacefulness in the work. Concentrating on the art activities and returning to the past events created a calm and quiet, shared space in which simply being was enough. When memories are visualised, lost moments can be recovered in a heartbeat.

In autobiographical work, it is said that the work in itself, the process of making art, is more significant than the theme. Ensuring peaceful, unhurried working conditions and sufficient time are, in addition to good tools and materials, require-







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ments for creating images and stories (please see Vesanen-Laukkanen 2004, 64–65; Malmivirta 2011, 193). Making images of one's life is a process, in which the images made affect the creation of new images. Images create stories, and new stories create new images. According to the sociocultural approach, the collective process of thinking, which takes place between and inside people, was emphasised in the sharing phase. The dialogue and the discussion were held together by mediating and receiving meaning according to certain rules, by appreciating the others' stories and listening to them intently.

In the phase of sharing the visual stories, the group members learned from each other, when they genuinely listened to each other and were engaged in a genuinely dialogic discourse. (Vygotsky 1978; Säljö 2004; Malmivirta 2011, 267) According to Varto (2007, 63), works of art are important in this dialogic aspect. In the *What do I want to remember from my life?* enactment, the makers of the visual narratives express something of themselves and of their childhood world to be made visible to others and to themselves. The works of art are full of meanings which originate from the artist's personal experiences. Therefore, the creations constructed always contain some characteristics that can also be understood by the audience of the work of art. With the help of these creations, the other person is then able to reach the existence of a shared world. It seems that such shared characteristics and memories were discovered, for example, from the fact that the participants had lived their childhood during roughly the same years.

In the sharing phase of the visual narratives, the art works generated many things to be told and shared. Everyone had gone through the same process as well as the experiences related to it. During the process, many moments recovered from memory were shared, with the wish that someone would listen to the story. The instructors would have liked to capture every story, and they did manage to record some of them, while others took form only in the moment of telling them. From the perspective of brain and memory activation, the fact that every participant in the participatory art activities has had the chance to tell the others things they themselves consider important, has been significant. Everyone reminisced about the course of their life together during the process, making hidden childhood stories heard and seen by telling and visualising them through art. By putting one's life into words, it is possible to simultaneously mediate spoken and unspoken messages. Stories need an audience, and by identifying with someone else's story, the interaction too becomes significant. Actively listening to a story and active presence also have positive effects on brain functions, such as visual perception, visual thinking and reflective thinking. (Siegel 1999; Madore 2010; Malmivirta 2013)

ACTIVATING BRAIN AND MEMORY FUNCTIONS

When planning the service model, we consulted occupational therapist Hanne-Maarit Suokas from the memory association Varsinais-Suomen Muistiyhdistys ry. Halfway through the group meetings Suokas held a lecture on the importance of activating brain and memory functions and on a more general level, on the functions of the brain. According to Suokas, traditional brain health lectures are not suitable for intensive project work such as this. The brain health themes must be integrated with the art themes, to make the whole project coherent. When giving a lecture on brain health, there is always

a risk of making the audience feel guilty or sounding too preachy. In this context, it was wise to emphasise the significance of brain activation. During the general section on brain health and memory, it turned out that many participants felt that their memory had improved already, half-way through the group activities. The participants felt invigorated and said that they had not been as forgetful lately as before. At this stage, no-one brought up any memory disorders their family members might suffer from, for example. After half of the meetings were held, no memory-related concerns came up in the group's discussions. Only one participant expressed a concern in the last sessions, related to a case of memory disorder in her family.

Suokas noted that looking at and discussing art activates the brain. According to research (please see Hyypä 2005), blood circulation in the brain increases by 10 per cent when looking at certain kinds of art. In addition to the eye movements and the effects of viewing art, the recovery of the event during the next group session activates memory functions. Brain activation could be seen to start from the moment the participants started planning going to the next meeting and orient themselves towards what is coming. Each stage in the group activates the brain. The group's way of working was very intense. The group members concentrated on listening to instructions, visual perception, the technical performance and the reminiscing very intensively for the duration of the session, two hours. The members felt that these lectures were very important.

The topic was very interesting, particularly because we realised that there is still hope for developing brain functions in many ways. There's dancing, exercise, art and more generally, just being interested in different things, instead of just staying indoors and getting dementia. (Participant no. 3)

6.2. What do I want to remember from my life? – From experience to knowledge

PROCESSING THE INTERVIEW MATERIAL

When working with narrative data, three kinds of dialogue are needed (Kujala 2007, 27; Malmivirta 2011, 160): listening to the story teller's voice; listening to the theory that provides content and tools for the interpretation; and reflective thinking during the reading of the transcribed material, based on which conclusions concerning the stories of the interviewees are constructed. In this research and development work, the essential question was, what is it exactly in art activities that activates memory functions and cognitive capabilities.

At the beginning of reading the interviews, we applied a categorical content-oriented approach in the narrative analysis. At this time, the narratives formed from the interviews were cut into smaller pieces and the expressions and words contained within the narratives, which had been classified into certain categories, were collected from the interview mate-

rial. The process of the *What do I want to remember from my life?* enactment as well as significant events in individual participants' process experiences can be read in the interview stories. The main categories suitable for this research and development project can be read in from the narratives of the different process phases; they feature often in the stories told by the participants. (Please see Lieblich et al. 1998, 12; Malmivirta 2011, 161)

The reading of the interviews was continued to discover the sub-categories of the main categories. The objective was to retain the richness of the story telling in the interviews while at the same time organise it into suitable sub-categories. As the categorisation proceeded, each piece of categorised content could be used in the description for forming a more general picture of what things and events have been significant during the *What do I want to remember from my life?* art processes. Once this phase had become clearer, we returned to the literature related to the topic. After the further organisation and understanding provided by the literature, it was possible to seek an answer to the second question of the research and development work: what kind of art and culture keys for boosting brain health could we find in the narratives of the participants and the analysis we had made?

In the planning of the citizen-centric art activities in all four service models of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* subproject, the connection of the art activities to a methodically controlled regulation of intellectual art activities was taken into consideration. In order for the art activities to enable life-long learning and changes in thinking patterns, they would have to entail both experience-based and intellectual dimensions. The planning of the activities ensured that they would be participatory, enrich the experiences of the participants and develop their reflective thinking capacities. This way, we strived to consciously affect the activation of brain and memory functions. In order to avoid the art activities becoming merely a collection of sensory perceptions and to ensure that they would significantly affect thinking, the activities had to be active and participatory. The names of all four service models were significant in relation to the planning of the content as well as the actual activities. The name of the *What do I want to remember from my life?* service model was chosen to make the connection of the art activities to the participants' personal life visible, and at the same time, attach the topic to personal memories and to make visible what was stored in the memory. This way, the personal experiences of each of the participants became the starting point of the art activities as well as a source of information.

Following Dewey's approach, experiential education stresses expanding the actor's (learner's) perspective by utilising the perspective of others. You cannot simply pass knowledge to others: the purpose of communication is to activate the other person to find, discover and understand the new concept. The objective is not just sharing ideas discovered by others. Therefore, any idea is always something that requires processing. It is a challenge that expects an answer, and a struggle, in order to come into the light. The task of the teacher and instructor is to provide the right circumstances for this struggle to safely take place, and to provide instructions and guidance to the actor, as necessary. Gaining a new insight is always controlled by the actors themselves. The teachers and instructors of the groups put themselves out to ensure that those joining the group can commit, guided by their experiences, to new meaningful situations, in which they can, based on their activities, create and combine the meanings and connections they perceive. (Dewey MW 9, 164–166; Väkevä 2004, 202–203, 162–163; Malmivirta 2011, 163)

THE VISUAL NARRATIVE AS A WINDOW

When the participants told us in the interviews about their experiences in the art activities, their visual narratives that integrated autobiographical art, photographs and personal stories acted as kinds of windows for returning to childhood and remembering childhood events vividly. They told themselves about themselves: this act can be described as remembering the self. Who am I and where do I come from? When perceiving the work of art as a whole, the parts observed and indicated with the finger become part of the whole, always leading towards new horizons. The eye grasped what it saw: it followed what it saw in relation to the whole, its location, its size, its brightness and distance. The narrator perceived the shapes, colours, movement and light of the object he was watching, as well as the internal connections and tension, the psychological forces, between them. In the experience of perception, our physical and psychological systems create a structured selection which helps us to decide the balanced location of each visual element in the entity we see. The visual experience cannot be expressed with just figures or measurements, with quantitative elements. In these narratives, the quality and expression of perception can be witnessed in the existing tensions and connections. Each brush stroke, touch of pastel or story hidden in a photograph has meaning in the complete narrative. They wake what is asleep and move the space. This way, seeing becomes an active and functional process of perceiving. (Arnheim 1974, 10-15; Malmivirta 2011, 221-222)

In the interview situations, each participant told us where they had heard of this project and what it was exactly that had persuaded them to join. They said that they had been curious to see what the project would entail. Nearly all of the participants had some experience of memory disorders, either through work or due to a relative or a family member being affected.

No, not me, but I know that my mum had Alzheimer's, and my grandmother, when I think about afterwards, she must have had it too. It shouldn't be hereditary, but probably I have those genes anyway. (Participant no. 2)

My ears were right away like "oh oh, there's something wrong with my memory, I must join this, oh oh". Without thinking anything more about it. (Participant no. 3)

The words 'art' and 'culture' both confused and fascinated the participants and stirred some questions: Do I know what to do? Will I learn what to do? For those who did choose to join the group, courage won in the end. Some participants knew each other beforehand from participation in voluntary work or through being friends or relatives. The participants said that they had been slightly nervous and although somewhat expectant when coming to the first meeting, but that the group had felt comfortable from the first meeting. They came to each meeting with a trusting attitude, even though the content of the enactment activities and group meetings was kept somewhat a secret until the end.

There was an ad... About something like this, and I'm like that, I get excited about almost anything that is a bit weird and new, and well, I thought, I have time, let's find out what it's all about Yes, and it was something completely new. When they said it was art, I thought that we would paint something and... Or I didn't really know what to think, but I thought about paintings and such. And then I just decided that I'd sign up... (Participant no. 2)

Well, this was something completely new to me at least, nothing like this, I mean, I have never, I really love to read books. (Participant no. 5)

Well, I'm usually kind of impulsive; when I get excited about something, and I really do, quite easily, and somehow this one, because it was here in Kotikunnas where I'd been before. I knew the place, and this was a short thing, wouldn't take too long. (Participant no. 1)

...And then the word 'art' was really fascinating, too. And 'memory'. Yes, there was like some proper content in it, because I'm no artist myself, but then... but this. But I think it was just that, that there was some substance, some content. Like the thing with memory. And there was some lighter content, like the art, I mean... They are both serious, but art and memory, remembering, but... (Participant no. 1)

When examining the visual narratives in front of them, the participants said that the method of working, making art, had been new to all of them. Mixing paints and *discovering colours had been challenging but also fun to experiment with. The brush had started to move more smoothly once the participants received some instructions. During the process, the participants grew familiar with the tools and materials. They also expressed their appreciation of having been able to use new, high-quality tools and materials acquired just for the group. With practice and doing, the act of making art became truly an art in itself.*

During the interview, the participants took turns to examine the work of art they had created. Emotions varied from bewilderment to pride and pure happiness over what they had been able to accomplish. "I took a leap of faith and learned something new," they said.

Well, I think this has all been a kind of an special thing, it's been really fun this, and it has made me curious about what's going to happen the next time. (Participant no. 1)

Yep, you see, there was the art, and then I thought, I'm sure I'll make something up, I've dabbled with something like this before, just like that, one two and go. I'm a bit what you might call ex tempor. (Participant no. 3)

CREATIVE THINKING

Making and experiencing art is always about facing something completely new. Experiences are meaningful when different ways of thinking, experiencing, listening, talking and acting are present in them. Fundamentally, it all comes down to creativity. The ability to tolerate vagueness, incompleteness and delayed appreciation and courage to cross one's boundaries are all said to play a part in creativity. In addition to this, decision-making capabilities are connected to creativity. In Varto's approach to creativity (2001, 100–109; Malmivirta 270–271), human beings are given a way to live and act which in itself provides the opportunity to choose a creative life. The question is how to find this way of living. In the weekly meetings of the research and development work of all of the four service models within the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* subproject, a space and place for experiencing and making art was created, providing an opportunity to discover hidden resources within oneself. The stories of the group participants reveal that they had been curious to try something new. This could also be described as human beings' need to create something new. Based on Dewey's pedagogic approach, continuous spaces of discontinuity were actively created in the art activity exercises (Malmivirta 2011, 270), juxtaposing the participants' personal experiences with everything they had experienced during their lives. The spaces of discontinuity are a prerequisite for creativity. This state of discontinuity is present everywhere in human life; in nature, culture, and the terms of experience. Rescue from the states of discontinuity always creates something new: a new kind of thinking and changes in actions.

Well, I think this has all been a kind of a special thing, it's been really fun this, and it has made me curious about what's going to happen the next time.. (Participant no. 1)

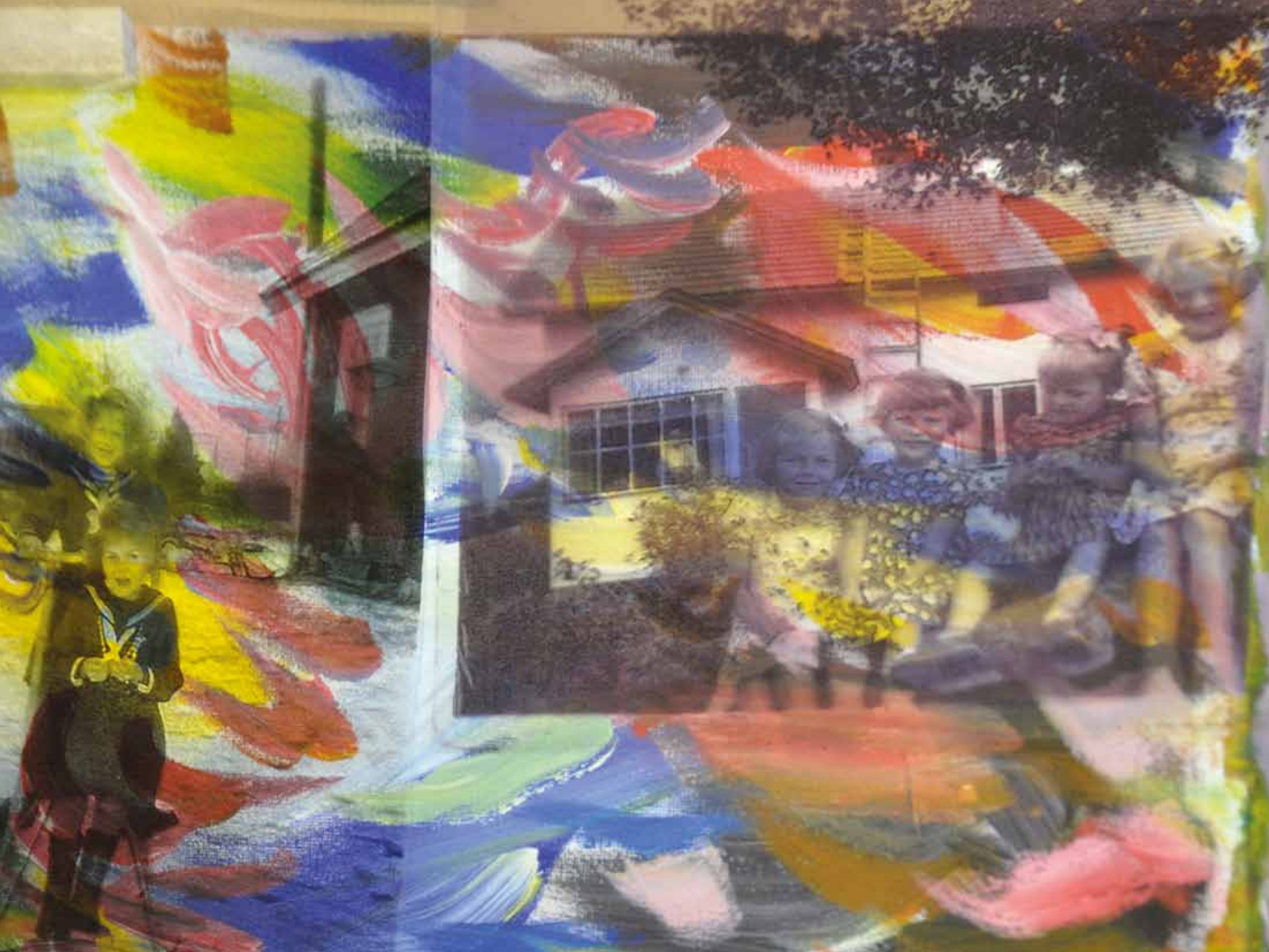
Yep, you see, there was the art, and then I thought, I'm sure I'll make something up, I've dabbled with something like this before, just like that, one two and go. I'm a bit what you might call ex tempore. (Participant no. 3)

So that you wouldn't always think the same way. Yeah. Yes, this was fun and exciting pretty much all the time. Well, not really. The only thing is that when you're no a painter, you feel that this didn't turn out the way you had imagined or thought. (Participant no. 1)

Yes, but I did think somewhere along the way that there had to be some kind of reason for it, in the teaching I mean. I mean what is done in what phase. What, and with what, is done each time and so forth. (Participant no. 1)

Creativity, or creative thinking, is thought to entail insightful thinking and creating something new. In this thinking, creativity would be something new to the creator, letting go of old concepts and methods, and engaging in more efficient, humane and original thinking and acting in a given situation. Creativity and creative thinking mean the capability of perceiving different angles. It means mental and active actions and covers the entire field of human activities from daily chores, work, relationships, finances and technology to art, science and philosophy. (Rogers 1976; Guilford 1987; Csikszentmihalyi 1996) To allow creativity to blossom, a safe and trusting atmosphere is required.





Interesting in that sense, that we could make something new, and then there was this, how should I say it, a good atmosphere here. It was nice, and we had good instructors too. And then there's something else, too... That you started to wait for the Wednesday mornings. Like, something nice is going to happen today, something interesting. (Participant no. 2)

Everyone was pulling together, like, or we didn't pull at anything, but there were no quarrels, not that I noticed anyway. That there were any. Well, yes. Yes, we had a good time. (Participant no. 1)

Then it's different, but when it comes to it, creativity I mean, I guess it comes by itself, you just have to tickle it a bit. (Participant no. 1)

...Yes, let's see... Was there something about... that we would make something ourselves, that was what drew me, to see what I could make. (Participant no. 4)

Well it went fine, I mean I am not very sociable, me, but I do like to... And you were all so, I was surprised that... Well, you're used to it at some workplaces, and it was always very polite at mine, the supervisors said good morning and all. Yes, I would say that it felt nice that they noticed that you had come. Yes. And it was really nice to come, too. (Participant no. 5)

6.3. Keys developed in this service model

After the interview material was analysed and organised, we described the keys to promote brain and memory functions created in the process of the research and development work of the What do I want to remember from my life? service model. The first key in this service model is the key of creativity:



- Key 1.
CREATIVITY AND CREATIVE THINKING
- Courage to take a leap of faith
 - Courage to try and experiment
 - Ability to tolerate incompleteness
 - *Ability to make decisions*
 - Ability to produce something new
 - Insightful thinking

VISUAL PERCEPTION AND VISUAL THINKING

The works of art created in the process, the visual narratives, reflect like a mirror all that has happened during the process, the minute details and their meaning to one's self. The work of art is also a window that provides access behind the visible stories. In the interviews, the participants examined their creations closely: the eye followed the brush stroke, recollecting in the mind the events that took place during the painting process. They told us about the colours and their meaning. Often their finger would move over the edge of the painting, tracing something only visible to the narrator. There are places in the painting from which the narrator can go deeper and deeper, to forget themselves in a place of the past and examine its details, although they might return to the present moment every now and then. And in the next moment, they will wonder about the future: what they should and could do, and perhaps they will take out their paints at home. The participants liked the intermediate task of finding old childhood photographs, and had already absorbed themselves in the photos at home. The next key is the key of visual perception and visual thinking.



Key 2.

VISUAL PERCEPTION AND VISUAL THINKING

Visual perception

- Selection of photographs
- Selection of colours, design of layout and painting
- Focussing on and selection of details

Visual thinking

- Connecting the photographs to the narrative
- The visual narrative as a window to new stories of the past
- Thinking in the continuum of present, past and the future

The visual narratives processed by the participants served as a place for memory, both when describing the process as well as when making the stories emerging from the past heard. Based on the narratives and our observations, we found that the group felt that making art, the process of creating your own visual story, was very important (please see Matarasso 1997). The participants really concentrated on examining the photographs and their details, and wanted to describe them and share the memories they stirred. Visual perception creates visual thinking.

...And it was like being inside the painting, I mean, wasn't there a picture like that. (Participant no. 3)

Yes, it was right-, I mean, you started to think about what it really was like, and then... You tried really hard to remember. When you look at the old photos and everyone here, that's when you start to remember things... Yes, like I was thinking when I looked at these that we had these different clothes and all, and then I thought: "Oh,

when did mother have time to sew those?", or something, you see, there was so much to do. And then... You do have to think. It makes you respect them a bit more, I suppose. (Participant no. 3)

I remembered so much, and just about this time period. We moved when I was something like ten, then we moved into our own house, we were like... Dad was the janitor and worked and... There was a lot of work, because this was an apartment building and we lived here, in the separate courtyard building. That was what it was like, but it was very nice. But there was the cleaning of the corridors and staircases and warming up the sauna, and then the firewood, because the central heating was with firewood, that kinds of thing. (Participant no. 5)

Yes, I don't know. And this turned out pretty dark, when I was thinking about the grass and the yard, because a grocery store yard, well... It was pretty awful. But, it was a huge yard, yes it was. That was what it was like. And this was lovely somehow, here. (Participant no. 5)

REFLECTIVE THINKING

During the process, the instructors actively tried to ensure that a certain distancing, stepping closer and then further away from the act of making, would take place in the selection of photographs and colours, painting the background, attaching the photographs to the canvas and completing the entire visual narrative. The photographs in themselves helped in directing the gaze to the details and seeing them more clearly. The areas perceived evoked a surge of memories which the participants started to process further by making them visible: transferring the images to the canvas and adding colours to them. It looked as if at this stage, the memories were starting to come alive: the narrators were walking in their childhood landscapes as if they really were there. The same happened when observing the visual narrative. It was as if the memories came to life when the finger pointed in the right direction, tracing the surface of the painting. According to Arnheim (1974, 10–11; Malmivirta 2011, 220–221), in visual perception, each object detected is a part of a bigger whole. Once the eye grasps what it sees, it will follow the object relation to the entire piece, its location, its size, its brightness and distance. We perceive also the internal connections and tensions between the shape, colour, movement and size of the object, its psychological powers.

The colours of a summer's day in my childhood, the blues, yellows and greens and... That ditch was quite important when I was a child, and it still is. What I think is really great about it, although it's a bit unkempt and like that now, but somehow it hums and murmurs in the sum-, in the spring and autumn. It's that kind of murmuring, like the rapids. The place is called Koskenranta. (Participant no. 1)





I don't remember anything, except for my cousins here, they were important. And then afterwards, when I was there last... This background, it still looked like this the last time I was there. First there was the fence, and then these houses and barns. And here, there is this space between them. Grandma lived here with my uncle, and the other uncle lived with his wife and boys there, so that they could see each other, there was this space. These here, I don't remember so much, they were older, I didn't spend time with them, it was more that they took care of me. Looked after me, to make sure I wasn't up to any mischief. And here in the neighbour's house there was this boy, about my age, and it was with him that I got up to mischief. Once we got lost in the woods... Well, they found us anyway. They said they'd heard my loud voice, I'd been crying so loud. Yes, me and him left to meet his uncle, he was working there somewhere. We went round and round, and he said he knew where we were, and then we got lost. Luckily we weren't far from the path the uncle walked, and then grandma and his parents of course.... (Participant no. 2)

It looks like the narratives contain an experience of perception, as described by Arnheim (1974), in which a person's physical and psychological systems created a structured selection that helps to decide the balanced location of each pictorial element in the work viewed as a whole. The narrator describes the details while keeping in mind the complete illustrated narrative. Seeing is an active and functional act of perception, in which the memory and the visual area of the brain are in an active state (Zeki 1999). Everything that can be seen is, in principle, at the reach of the viewer's gaze. The experiences gathered during the process of making art as well as the psychological and spiritual-level experiences that have inspired the act of making art, are all present in act of seeing and perceiving. Merleau-Ponty (1993, 26) describes the gaze as having a third eye: we already understand that our physical eyes are made for so much more than just the reception of light, colours, and lines. In his thinking, the eyes can be described as processors of the world, blessed with the gift of seeing. Merleau-Ponty strives to discover in seeing and in the visible that which they required from thoughts. To be able to think of a landscape, the viewer must recover a landscape from his memory with the help of an internal gaze.

Active searching, selecting, grasping at the essential, reduction, abstraction, analysing, synthesising, completing, repairing, comparing, problem-solving as well as combining, separation and contextualising take place both in the process of making art as well as in the perception of visual narratives. These cognitive operations refer to mental, psychological events that take place when information is received, stored and processed: in sensory perception, remembering, thinking and learning. Arnheim includes the concept of *perception* in the concept of *thinking*. When defined in this manner, perception is visual thinking. (Arnheim 1970, 14; Malmivirta 2011, 223)

During the art activities, the participants were instructed to actively direct their gaze at the works of art, photographs and their details under perception, as well as the construction of their personal work of art, while leaving room for personal choices and decision-making. When organising perceptions, the human mind operates with the memory and the enormous amount of images gathered in the different memory layers during life, and organises the lifelong experiences into systematic visual concepts (Arnheim 1970, 294).

This was something interesting, to get to make something, when you've never done anything like this with pictures. There was the planning and designing, how to make it look good. There's just that, that it looks different from a distance than if you look at it from here, there's nothing good-looking from here. But when you look at it from a distance, it looks better. This is just like I remember it, in the country, like my grandma's place. (Participant no. 2)

When sharing their observations about their visual narratives and the related experiences, the participants created linguistic and intellectual categories which they had learnt to use with the help of experiences from the previous communication situations. Language is the active and creative human being's means and ability to construct his reality. With the intellectual tools of language, it is possible to examine and process things and experiences in our life and environment in complex ways, in which the abundance of perspectives, places and spaces create an important storage of knowledge. Organising life experiences in a visual and narrative format can be viewed as a source of constructing meaning. When telling stories, we look backwards to the life we have lived. Reflection enables people to return to places in their personal childhood photographs, the pre-reflective places, and being present in these places, now primarily organised on the basis of our perceptions. Childhood photographs guided the participants with art-pedagogic means to the beginning of a visual exploration process of childhood, which was based on reflective thinking. (Säljö 2004, Greene 1995; Malmivirta 2011) The next key was reflective thinking.



Key 3.

REFLECTIVE THINKING

Visual narrative as a place of memory

- Art activities tied to the participant's personal life make hidden stories visible.
- The work of art allows participants to cast a reflective gaze, which may cause changes in thinking.
- Reflective thinking is psychological tool which helps to process matters related to childhood.

Reflective thinking creates a moment that can penetrate deeper and deeper in the memory. One memory stirs another, which creates a continuum of memories. Phases and basic characteristics of reflective thinking and research can be observed in this continuum (Dewey 1997, 112; Miettinen 1998, 90–92; Malmivirta 2011, 225).

Well, I have thought about these things, I think because of the writing too, yes, I have thought about things more now. But then I thought, there will be like a document left for me from all this, so that I can remember it better too, later on. Later. I will look at these often and remember what I've done... And then one memory creates another, another memory, and that... There will always be new memories, that's why our discussions are always meandering about here and there. (Participant no. 1)

Well, there were all these colours like that, that there was pink and and... green and blue like the ocean and then the sky and the clouds and, and then this brown and this yellow, it's kind of energetic, I'm quite an energetic person myself, so here's some red and yellow and... like wind, life flames, you see, they start from here. It's quite a blaze, if you light a match, it blazes up. Well, that's me. Yes, I think this depicts mostly that. And then there's the green. I've always like nature, and green. (Participant no. 3)

There I was, in the first grade, and I went skiing with my little brother, and then we got lost, and it got dark. ... Yes, it must have been huge, but you managed it just fine anyway. ... Well, I was in school already when that man met us in the woods and then I asked him the way to Kähäri school. B: Yes, I thought about reading and animals, the cottage and this skiing, that were could I find the skiing photo now, and well.... I don't remember which paper this is from. It's old. That's why I was happy with it, wherever it was from. Yes, look, there's a proper... Fur hat and the felt boots, too. And those short trousers and.... (Participant no. 4)

Yes, there were lots more colours there than here. So I decided to make the other one a bit different. Not that colourful. But here I was thinking about life, if you count colours. This is pretty dark, there's all sorts of happiness and sorrow. ... Yes. Yes, you kind of started to see what you were doing. Yes. In that sense that you saw it differently, you saw what you imagined it would be like. A little bit. (Participant no. 5)

Target-oriented participatory art activities strived to consciously create new situations, in which the participants were in the phase of intellectualising the difficulty experienced, and accepted the challenge. They tried out different colours, searched for a certain hue. They experimented with designing the picture surface in the best possible way to form a narrative and to please themselves. During this process, they searched for more photographs from home, to be able to better convey what their memory revealed. They examined the terms and conditions of the situation and formed an idea about the shape of the visual art work, while allowing the process run into any direction reflective thinking might lead to. In the continuum of reflective thinking, meanings are about the relationship of acts to their consequences and effects. This meaning relationship can be considered the end result of both thinking and deduction (Miettinen 1998, 92). During the art activities, the group members had turned the events and things related to their lives around and around in their minds, transforming them into images, a visual narrative, with the means of art, photographs and stories. They had actively paused and committed themselves to considering their life events and experiences and the complete work of art they had created based on those. Here, reflection refers to the intellectual phase of the meaning construction process, the ability to consider things from various angles and to subject them to serious and logical deliberation. The visual narrative works in the different phases of making art, but also as a psychological tool with which to describe events both to the audience and the self in the interviews (Säljö 2004; Malmivirta 2011).

LIFELONG LEARNING

In the basic structure of Dewey's experience (Alhanen 2013, 59–60), the functional interaction between a living being and its environment is made up of *acts* and *undergoing their consequences*. Acts and their experienced consequences consist of many elements, such as body movements, observations, emotions and thoughts. The desire to make a difference, to create change, is at the heart of the experience. Dewey describes the internal acts of the mind as thinking, memory and imagining. These are always somehow connected to human beings' desire to influence the surrounding conditions. The objective of this research and development project is to cause changes to and influence, on a general level, the understanding that art and culture are significant elements in activating brain and memory functions. The objective of the enacted activities was to create an understanding of the ways art and culture can be used to maintain one's brain health and to achieve changes in this thinking. But this was not all that took place in the activities, acts and directing the reflective gaze onto these. When examining past experiences, the group members experienced changes in their habitual behaviour. Lifelong learning became the next key.



Key 4.

LIFELONG LEARNING

- Finding a positive angle with the help of reflective thinking
- Understanding past childhood experiences from the perspective of the present
- Exceeding oneself, building an individual identity
- Understanding art, obtaining new skills and methodical expertise
- Learning something new
- Gaining aesthetic experiences

Some participants exhibited changes in their thinking and behaviour in relation to understanding past memories, in how they viewed the event; some in their courage in joining the group even though just the word art in itself caused some bewilderment and wonder in them. For some, courage meant trying and discovering something new, while for others, just joining the group was a courageous act. When examining their understanding of the life lived, constructed during the interview and the art activities, the group members reported an improved understanding of the events in their childhood. Past events were explored as a whole, as events in society that had concerned everyone in the group, such as changes the war had caused in the daily lives of the participants.

Dewey (LW 7, 171–172; Alhanen 2013, 88–89) examines the actions in human experience from the perspective of habits, meaning that the development of experiences is partially about the formation of habits. For Dewey, habits are rigid but also flexible. They are rigid because once formed, they guide our actions towards a certain direction. In this sense, they keep reinforcing themselves. On the other hand, habits are flexible, because they are not innate nor predetermined, but

are adopted through actions. Therefore, they can also be moulded with actions. When habitual behaviour becomes, due to reflective thinking, the object of examination in the art activities, behavioural models can change and become more flexible.

Experimentation in art and art activities can serve as a place for the imagination and creative thinking, but also as a creator and modifier of new, genuinely achievable objectives.

Yes, well, that's why I was thinking that when I think about my father and mother, well, they did the best they could. Yes. I guess everybody does. And we all make mistakes, there's nothing at all you can do about that. (Participant no. 3)

I've always tried not to remember too much, because I think that I had a horrible childhood, there's not much you'd want to remember. But now I've realised that whatever I thought, that it was quite carefree in any case and, there was, there were the juiciest berries and all these flowers and whatnot, there were lots of them, and there probably aren't any more. Nature... Yes, and we all should probably... well we should process our childhood, because if you don't, then you are in denial. (Participant no. 3)

And then here I thought about all the colours there were. And even though we had a lot of work at home, I still remember the sun, the sunny summer days. (Participant no. 1)

Art activities woven into one's life history and making the visual narrative travel in the continuum of the past and the present (Immonen 2013): the childhood world is examined from the perspective of the present. In the narratives, personal issues seen through the narrator, the self and the narrator's identity wind up together; both the social interaction in the social community as well as the situation of the society the narrator has lived in have affected these three aspects. This is a question of a lifelong identity change process. The construction of identity can be examined from the perspective of life narrative (Ropo 2009, 141; Malmivirta 2011, 218). Identity is the story of where I come from, who I am, and where I am going. We shall return to this theme when examining the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* enactment later on.

When examining the visual narratives, as well as in the interviews and the art exhibition at the final event of the project, all participants were proud of their creations and the praise and attention they received. They talked about having learned a lot about making art, and about themselves, during the process. Colours were given brand new meanings. Colours symbolise different things to different individuals.

Well, I've read books about mixing colours and all, I have read a lot, but then I noticed that it didn't really... Well, I made things sometimes with Vilma, enough to have noticed that it's not so easy. I painted a house and something like that... Well, but now I thought, or I think at least, that here, it's the mixing of colours that will be best, to find the colour you really like... (Participant no. 5)

Yeah. And here, when I didn't at first have enough colour, yes, here I knew how to take more of it. That's why. Then it went smoothly. Yes, yes. Yes, you can see it here. This is one of those, when the brush ran out of colour. But then, when I realised that I had to pick up a lot of paint, then it started to glide. (Participant no. 5)

You did say that. Yes, you did say that there should be no scratching sound. Because that's what happens, if you drag it. When it runs out. So here I knew what to do. (Participant no. 1)

That I've always thought of art like, oh how beautiful that is or something, and then the colours, like look, look at that painting, it's really nice, but as a whole. (Participant no. 5)

Changes occurred also in the approach towards art.

Probably the colours and shapes. It's now somehow different. You get these ideas that if you find something, you could use it to make something. (Participant no. 5)

That's why I feel, more and more, that the older I get, the more I'm interested in art and the more I've looked at art, but now this made me want to make more of art, too. (Participant no. 3)

I mean, you can make art from any kind of materials, that was new to me. I've always thought that it's sculptures or paintings, and that's art. But then... yes. You can make art any way you want, any way. The only limit is your imagination. (Participant no. 2)

In addition to this, the group members recounted having paid attention to the design of the piece, the colours and the beauty of the environment and what they considered beautiful in general.

To see where each bit belongs. Like this here, if I had put that there and this here, then... The tree in the middle... It's about the composition. It shows.

And then, does that fit there, and how to place this one, or this. It's very interesting. (Participant no. 1)

Yes, or I don't know what kind of decoration that is, but you can see it in my home when it's Easter or Christmas, that you can be sure of... (Participant no. 5)

Well, some colours are, I like colours. Yeah. But I don't know how to make anything else like that. Well, quite a lot, but you do start to look at colours differently. Because I don't usually understand art, but anyway, but I know what my eye is drawn to, I know what I think is beautiful. (Participant no. 2)

Dewey (Alhanen 2013, 181) describes the way aesthetic experiences should be closely linked to people's daily experiences. For Dewey, the aesthetic character does not primarily mean beauty in general; his definition is much more extensive. *Aesthetic experiences* are powerful moments of fulfilment in which a living being experiences, either consciously or subconsciously, that his efforts have warranted a closure once they have obtained a relationship with their environment. The aesthetic experience is not separate from experience as such. For Dewey, the aesthetic experience is an essential part of the natural rhythm of a living being and its environment, in which the being momentarily loses balance and is forced to build a new kind of relationship with its environment. In this sense, aesthetic experiences are not unconnected experiences, but natural and essential phases in the experience continuum of living beings. Thereby, aesthetic experiences play a crucial role in the development of experience, because they change our way of experiencing the world. (LW 10 (AE): 19–26); Alhanen 2013, 181–183) According to the accounts of the participants in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* project, changes in the approach to art, in seeing the surroundings in more detail than before, as well as in the ways of experiencing and making art, took place during the art activities process. The aesthetic experience is also processed and discussed in the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* enactment.

The art activities in the *Mitä haluan muistaa elämästäni?* enactment provided a space and a possibility for the participants to process their experiences from the course of their lives. The individual's ability to process his experiences is a crucial factor in defining his future. Any future experiences are always shaped by past experiences. At its best, the new experiences provide sensitivity, flexibility and possibilities for variation in our actions. They support and promote creative adaptation to coming challenges and situations. In John Dewey's approach (1916/1966; 1951), the individual human being's growth process continues throughout life. Adaptation and learning require directing reflective thinking into one's own actions and experiences – and learning from these experiences. In the most profound and demanding sense, learning creates the core of changing experiences and opens up the possibility of lifelong regeneration in changing environments and constantly changing situations. The beginning of the foundations for the lifelong learning of each individual is based on the approach that our mental development continues throughout our lives.

SOCIAL INTERACTION

The sociocultural learning activities in the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* project have succeeded in uncovering hidden resources in each and every participant. The group members became empowered to engage in a self-directed exploration of their photographs and the memories related to them, to discuss these memories with each other, and to discover something new within themselves as well as in the other participants. They acquired knowledge of the methods, materials and tools of making art and developed their artistic skills. They learned to see and look at art openly, in a different way to before. They learned to understand the course of past events in their personal history as a part of a larger whole.

The art activities in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* service model were instructed with a target-oriented approach, using art pedagogics, putting the human experience in the centre of the activities. The process facilitated the

examination of personal life experiences and seeing their value in the continuum of human growth and lifelong learning. The works of art created in the art activities represent visual expressions that attach themselves to the personal history of the participants. These expressions act in constructing meaning and in the endeavour to understand and rebuild yet more new meanings. In this process, all participants played an important role. Together, they formed a safe group in which they could share very personal experiences. This way, the works of art created served as a form of communication to the artists themselves as well as the other members of the group. Creating a work of art is a process, which allows something that was at first personal to be seen by and shared with others. (Dewey 2010, 84; Malmivirta 2011, 106) Social interaction had a special significance during the entire *What do I want to remember from my life?* process, which helped to build the following key:



Key 5
SOCIAL INTERACTION

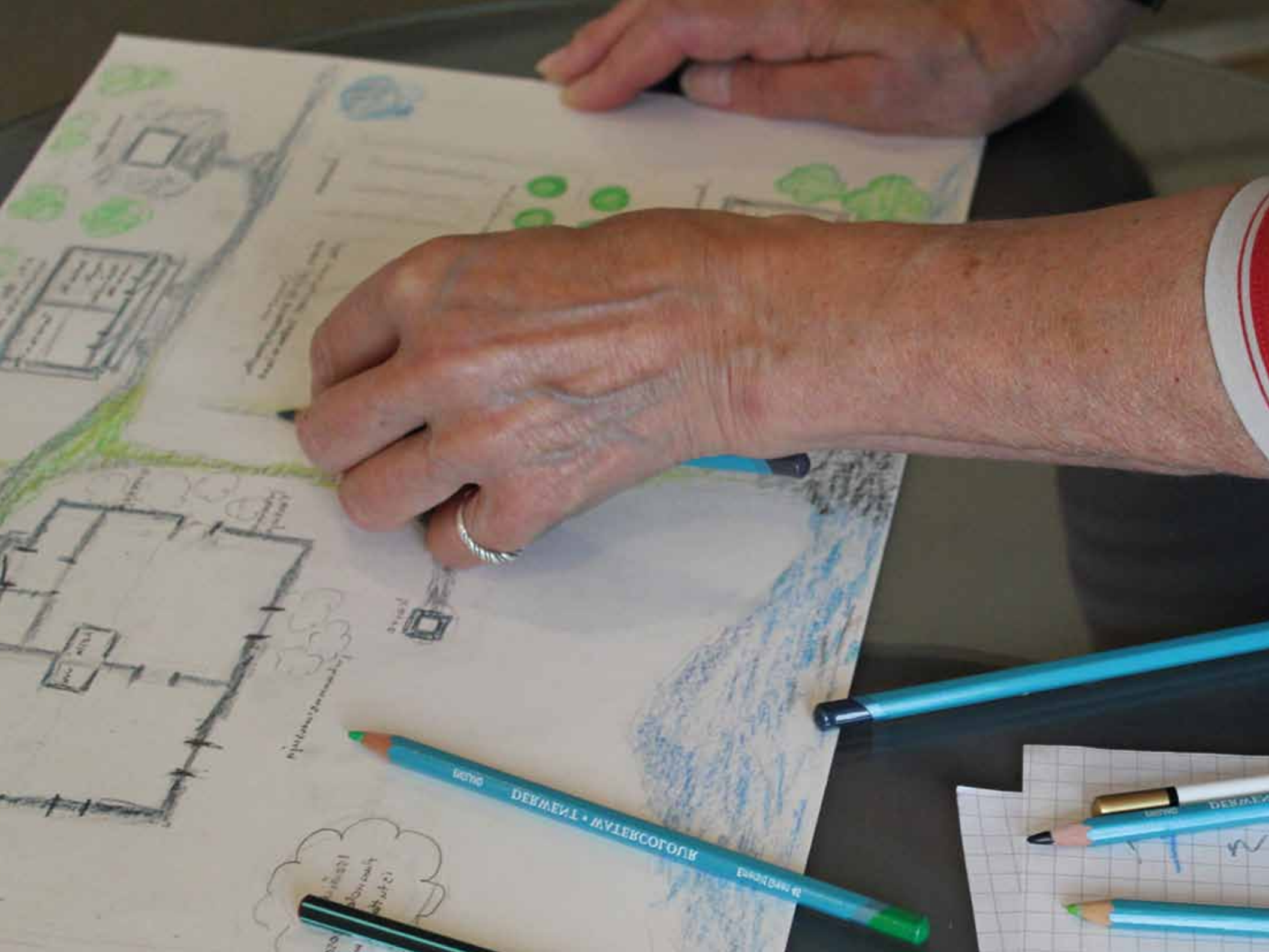
- interaction with self
- interaction with one's visual working process
- interaction with others

SUMMARY

In the sociocultural approach, the heart of the pedagogic activities is animation. Animation is always based on planning and target-oriented activities. A culture of animation strives particularly for the development of creative and diverse expression. In this sense, the different fields of art are emphasised in the activities, due to their expressive abilities. The social dimension, on the other hand, focusses on the group and strengthening the sense of community. The pedagogic instruction in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* art activities paid special attention to strengthening the sense of participation of each group member with the means of various exercises carried out in each session. The instruction aimed at an emancipated mode of action in which the key idea was to enable a dialogue between the self and world for each of the participants. In addition to this, the instructors and teachers were also learners, constantly reviewing their concepts related to the accounts of others, at the same time accepting the incompleteness of their own growth process as a part of a genuine dialogue. As Värri (2004, 18) notes, a dialogic relationship is possible only if we exceed our individuality, directed ourselves towards each other and let others present themselves exactly as they are. The group cohesion among the *What do I want to remember from my life?* participants developed already in the first meeting session. Each participant felt like they were an important member of the group. In addition to this, the participants felt that the atmosphere in the group was safe and enhanced trust and respect, which, in turn, enabled more unreserved conduct and sharing extremely personal issues with the others. The participants felt that sharing personal memories was natural in an environment of respect and appreciation, which also enhanced the sense of meaning.









YELLOW COTTAGE AND A PATCH OF POTATO

7. Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato

Helena Malmivirta

Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro, Helena Malmivirta and Suvi Kivelä acted as the instructors of the group.

The objective of the Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato enactment was to activate brain and memory functions by examining the architecture of the childhood home and environment with the means of photographs, personal stories and visual arts. By limiting the selection of images to photographs of the childhood home and environment, attention was drawn to the cultural environment and buildings of the time period, as well as to the stories of the participants' childhood world.

This enactment project was carried out in the art museum Salon taidemuseo Veturitalli from 4 September to 30 October and on 27 November, 2013. At the beginning of the process, an open lecture was held at Veturitalli as an orientation for the process. Architect Viri Teppo-Pärnä, award-winning protector of the cultural environments and traditional country landscapes of Paimio, was invited to lecture. The event attracted a broad and avid audience, and several interested audience members signed up to the group. At first, the group started with eight members, and in the third meeting, gained yet another member. In addition to this, we received several enquiries later on, but at that time, the process was already well under way, and we closed the enrolment after the third meeting. The group met weekly in the café of the art museum. This space is a natural part of the art museum; we were truly inside the museum. Previously, the art museum was for the participants a place to visit exhibitions; now, it became a space for different kinds of activities. When planning the enactment, the exhibitions organised during the project were taken into account.

The following section describes the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* service model and its development process. In addition to this, the keys created during the research and development work of this service model are described. Material about the participants' voice and experiences was gathered through group interviews. All participants were present in the interviews. The material used here consists of the participants' accounts of their experiences. The material has been analysed and categorised in the same way as in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* service model. However, as the analysis proceeded, the material turned out to be too sparse to account for what had taken place during the participatory art activities. Therefore, the material was complemented with a video of the sharing phase in the last meeting session, which was then transcribed and analysed in a similar way to the material in the first service model.

The portfolios containing architecture of the participants' childhood homes and environments, photographs and personal stories, created in the art activities of the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* service model, worked as a window for describing the process of the art activities and the stories that emerged in the process. After the group meetings held during the research and development work for the service model, the instructors held an assessment discussion, based on which the content of the next meeting was directed according to the objectives set. The instructors had reflective discussions about art, art methods, learning and teaching, as well as about understanding the need for art, culture, and making art. Keeping the individual and their personal history as the starting point of the art activities was considered very important. Processing personal experiences is important, and experience-based art activities create a sense of accomplishment and meaning in the creative act.

7.1. Description of the service model and the keys developed in it

PLUNGING INTO PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE ARCHITECTURE OF CHILDHOOD HOMES AND ENVIRONMENTS

The lecture given by architect Viri Teppo-Pärnä inspired so many thoughts that in the meeting the following week, the participants had brought with them stacks of photographs of their childhood yards and environments in which they had played. The stories entwined with the photographs had already come to life at home, when searching for the images. The photographs selected from the home archives were emotionally interesting, and in the group, they were examined at great length and discussed thoroughly (Halkola 2009, 57). This created an event similar to that of the participants in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* enactment looking at the punctum photographs. The viewer of the photographs plunges deep into the image, as it were, and the stories contained within the photograph come to life. When a photograph is significant to its owner, it creates tension between the moment of taking the photograph and the moment of viewing, making the viewer travel back in time. Hentinen (2002, 41) notes that an image can act as an impulse for stimulating thoughts, emotions and memories, as well as a mediator for somatosensory information. One photograph may invite the viewer to pause for a long time. In the group, time was consciously allocated for the stories evolving from the images, and the instructors acted as the audience for the stories bubbling up from the hidden depths of the mind.

Ten independent municipalities of the past, now part of the city of Salo, were recreated through the photographs in front of our eyes, with their blocks, houses, and people. The discussions revealed many things the participants had in common, returned to shared journeys, and discovered shared acquaintances or relations. People, roads, courtyards, now demolished beautiful old houses of the past, and their residents, came to life in the rich narratives of the stories. The borders of the photographs disappeared as stories continued past what was visible in them. The houses next to the ones in the photos and the inhabitants of those houses were present in the stories and narratives of daily lives.



This one here is Turhala, and this is the fire brigade. This is one of those octagonal... The roof, the windows... Jääskeläinen owned the road in which we lived, and he thought it was useless. There we were. This one here still exists today. That street is Asemakatu. Yeah. And this is the road into the courtyard. And boys were never allowed here, but on Sundays, there was coffee and tea, or hot chocolate, but I wasn't allowed to go between this here flower bed and the cottage. It was like a forbidden zone. (Participant no. 6)

This belonged to this kid, he was adopted, which was at the time... This one is older, but here was Valokuvaamo Ritva, Ritva's photographic studio. And then in this one, now where was that? It was here. In through the gate, it was here, this was the main building. And some of these nice details here weren't there when I was there, or we were. (Participant no. 6)

... Yes, you can see it here in the background. And it was... The photographic studio was here, here was nothing, and here this old well with a pitched roof and a bucket and a crank. That was here in between. And here, in the hawthorn hedge, there was a single leaf gate. And here's the courtyard. This is a family celebration, and in our family, as long as I, or as long as my father could remember, we've played this bowling game. (Participant no. 6)

In autobiographical activities, exploring punctum photographs allows an emotional connection to be formed with the most significant people, places and events in our lives. Viewing a punctum photograph is described as crossing paths with a coincidence in the image which awakens the mind (Halkola 2009, 56). Furthermore, the photographs were particularly moving because the emotions they contained carried special meaning. Architect Viri Teppo-Pärnä's lecture and later on, local architect Lauri Hollmen's lecture on Salo's history, as well as the instructions issued before the meeting, inspired the group members to examine the buildings, environments and hidden playing environments as well as the inhabitants of the houses in the photographs. The sociocultural learning approach was realised in the best possible way, and even in the first meeting, the members had empowered themselves as competent actors and directors of their own action.

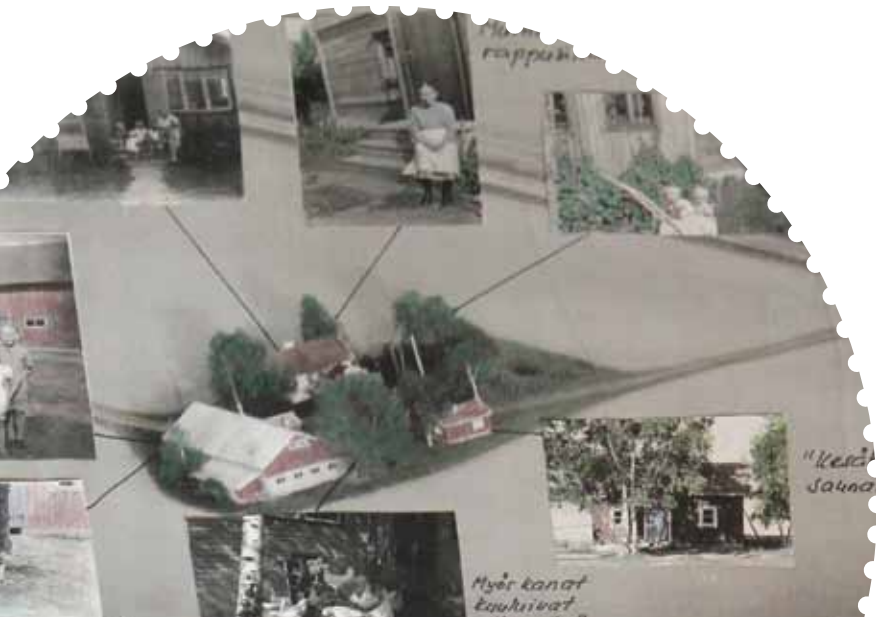
ROUTES IN CHILDHOOD PLAYING ENVIRONMENTS

The process of working with the photographs continued by drawing maps of the playing areas in the childhood homes and environments. The photographs depicting homes and the home environment were approached from different angles. The cities of Tampere, Lappeenranta and Salo and the places and details in these cities were examined from a bird's eye view. Experiences in the memory stirred and were transferred onto paper. From a bird's eye perspective, childhood environments appeared as geometric shapes or lined landscapes of the home and surrounding fields.

Sandström (2010, 114–115) explains that experiences in personal history are stored in the autobiographical memory, to which a sense of stability in the self is integral. This stability creates the basis for self-awareness and remembering meaningful events. The basic composition of episodic memory is defined (Tulving 2002, 1–25; Sandström 2010, 114) with three interrelated concepts: the self, awareness of the here and now, and subjective sense of time. Subjective sense of time refers to the ability to shift to thinking about something that has happened in the past. The basic idea in Tulving's definition is that the rememberer understands that he is the same person both in the now as well as in the experiences of the past. The event is described as mental time travel which also entails the ability to mentally transfer into the future, to imagine coming events. The group members understood that they were observers of their own lives, and the time travel continued very intensely through the decades, to times, experiences and events everyone wanted to share. The landscapes depicted from a bird's eye perspective as well as the photographs related to them were filled with stories.



Yes. If she had a lots of pictures of her environment, then here, here's our courtyard, the one I've been trying to remember, what it was like when I was a child. And here was this old, or still is, the kind of house they built after the war, and then the cowshed was built, it was... it was 1952, before there was a long storehouse, which was here already when they came, and a cow shed at the other end, and they would have to bring the hot water there in the morning and all with a sledge or a cart from home, until this one here was finished. And there was the sauna, or there it still is. And then my uncle, we had this thing that my grandparents or my father's mother and father, and his brother, a bachelor, lived here, and then my mother and father and us three children, I was the middle one. Yes, well, there's usually just a sauna and a dressing room, but uncle Antti was the type who did a lot with his hands, and he got permission to build a small sauna house, where he had a joiner's bench and the things he, he made almost all of our furniture and such. (Participant no. 7)





SECRET CHILDHOOD ROUTES

The map theme continued in the next meeting. During the next session, the bird's eye view map could be zoomed in and the secret childhood routes made visible by drawing them. Furthermore, the maps had inspired the participants to explore and acquire maps of their home towns and streets during the week, and in the meeting, the group could examine these maps together. The places of houses already demolished or ruined, fences and yards from decades ago were pointed out. Interesting tales invoking curiosity found once again their audience. Sandström (2010, 115) explains that time loses meaning when recalling facts from your personal past, such information related to your identity, personality or birth place. Memory layers and visual perception were in active motion in this phase, when narratives, photographs and maps integrated into each other. The autobiographical memory and autobiographical visual work require complicated cooperation between our cognitive and emotional processes which activate different parts of the brain (Sandström 2010, 115).

BENEFITS OF A DIVERSE RANGE OF VISUAL ARTS

The instructors listened to the participants' stories and helped them in creating maps and descriptions of childhood environments by using diverse art methods: painting, drawing, and combining these techniques. Enlarging old photographs, highlighting details with pastels, designing their composition on a larger paper and writing down the stories in the photographs returned the mind to the events and mental landscapes of the time of the photographs. The personal lifetime experiences of the participants formed the starting point and knowledge base for the art activities. Autobiographical time travel related to the life stories of the participants put childhood experiences in motion, although being aware of them as significant and even key experiences of life could at times be painful (Halkola 2009, 57). Visual perception, visual thinking, locating places and distances in time and in the course of events in the participants' personal life course all took place in the drawing of maps of the childhood play areas. This process entailed decision-making, selections, imagination and creative thinking before the life events could be transferred, with the means of art, from the complex and hidden tapestry of memory into something visible, to be looked at by others and the artist themselves and shared with others. It was as if the events from the time of the photographs became more vivid when the images were enlarged and processed with colours, as noted by these two participants standing in front of their art works:

And then when I added some pastel colours, it was like the sun came out. The colours were added onto black and white. That did it, it kind of jumped out. So, here, at this end, here's the swing, the lawn swing, and this is the view from the swing, there's a field of barley in the picture, and here's the store house, because I thought that I would like to put it here somewhere. Because you can nearly see all the way to Paimio from here. (Participant no. 7)

And then my parents had moved there, they had been evacuated from Sysmä, here. And this was the first one, this cottage, it belonged to the Fulkkila manor, this one did. Fulkkila. And there was just the living room and the bedroom and this, it was really small, but we were quite a few who lived there. To think! Yes. So we fitted in there just fine. Then there was the barn, this street here is Hakamäentie, and the barn was on this side of the street, and it still is. And then we built, it was at the beginning of the 50s, this house here, and moved in, and here's the view from there, here's the field, the cottage was here, and here's a big hill which has these, these piles of stones... (Participant no. 8)

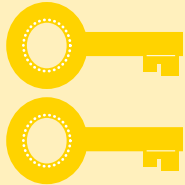
KEYS DEVELOPED IN THIS SERVICE MODEL

In the Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato art activities, exploring the architecture of the childhood home and environment with photographs made personal stories visible, to be told and shared further with others. The narratives and the process opened up the building culture and daily country culture of the time depicted in the photographs, as well as urban life during the war and after it. An enormous amount of historical knowledge was present in each meeting. With the



means of art, the group members became producers and narrators of cultural knowledge of daily life. They were active operators, but also sociocultural motivators to each other and the instructors. The role of the instructors was to listen and to provide subtle guidance on how to make the invisible stories visible in a way suitable for each participant.

The entire process of the Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato project alternated between visual and reflective thinking; sharpening the gaze, distancing the perspective, sketching the forms and selecting the best colours to highlight the perceptions. The finger guided both the narrator and the audience to travel in the image, to trace the shapes, colours and outlines of the pictures, and to follow the narrative by looking deep into the stories hidden in the photographs. Based on our presence and observations and the analysis of the visual material, video transcripts and other material, the two first keys in the research and development work of the Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato service model turned out to be the same keys that were developed in the first service model:



Key 1.
VISUAL THINKING AND VISUAL PERCEPTION

Key 2.
REFLECTIVE THINKING

In the art activities of the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* service model, the participants proceeded at their own pace; the stories and making them visible took their time. To achieve this, the instructors had to have the ability to listen in a genuine dialogue. Postmodern art education talks of re-performance and the interpretation of the perceived reality. The works of art are representations which bring forth numerous different realities. Childhood environments were now depicted with maps and re-interpreted maps, with metaphors created from shapes, and with telling stories with words. In art, metaphors and figures of speech help to define every-day experiences which do not yet have a linguistic representation or a concept, but for which the need to give shape nevertheless exists. Verbal and visual language is said to be (Säljö 2004, 107, 95–96; Malmivirta 2011, 224) a constitutive element in the active and creative individual's ability to construct reality. With the intellectual tools provided by language, it is possible to examine and process our environment in a complex manner, allowing the abundance of perspectives to create a significant knowledge resource for the individual. Arranging life experiences in a narrative format is, at the same time, giving meaning to experiences (Taylor 1989, 51–52; Greene 1995, 75; Malmivirta 2011, 224).

When we tell stories, we at the same time reflect back upon our lives. The reflection process enables presence in the places constructed based on our perceptions. In order to make mental representations visible, processing perceptions into something visual is achieved with the help of conscious active thinking and utilising the tools and materials of art. Perceptions obtained through sight are important, but they alone are not sufficient to organise that which is perceived. The other senses, mental processes, thought and imagination are also present in active seeing. (Sava 2007, 98; Dewey 2010, 73; Malmivirta 2011, 225)

Another factor for consideration that clearly emerged, was the idea of the purpose of the work, now that we already knew what we had to work with. But what you really should think about, is why you do it, as with this work or attempt, really, I mean when you put it all together. (Participant no. 9)

Furthermore, the process of making art released talent:

And then we come to this, I mean that I had this certain resistance, this I was glad to make, the house, but grabbing the artist's tools like crayons and water colours or some other colour was to me like... At some point in my past life I worked in a project developing community culture, and from there, I got some feedback... Some talent was clearly released here. (Participant no. 9)

Art can be used to seek and manifest that which conceptual language cannot grasp. In art, the task of silence is to hide meanings and reveal their reality in bright light. The art activities in the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* service model brought forth different possibilities for expressing a personal narrative in a visual format. In addition to this, making art developed the knowledge and skills of the participants in using and applying the material and tools in a way suitable for each participant (Filander 1997, 140; Malmivirta 2011, 230). The *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* project participants' understanding of artistic thinking developed both in the reception of the works of art in the exhibitions as well as in the visualisation of significant events and stories from their personal history. Furthermore, the process of making art developed the group's skills, which helped to create a language for personal expression. One could also talk of artistic thinking: about a certain way to see, think, do and tell things differently. (Varto 2008, 81–84; Houessou 2010, 46–47)

AT AN ART EXHIBITION

We agreed with the curator Pirjo Juusela that two guided art exhibition tours could be included in the service model. Museum assistant Mia Erpi gave the participants a guided tour in the works of art and the 'Transform' exhibition by the Japanese artist Hiroyuki Masuyama. The exhibition consisted of photographic art and was ideal for the starting phase of the enactment, as the photographs evoked possibilities for reinterpretation in the participants' personal photos too. Guided by Pirjo Juusela, the group members were introduced to the art of Ilkka Lammi, who passed away at a young age. These works of art and getting know their background pushed forward the process of making the stories hidden in the memory and the photographs heard and seen. Before the guided exhibition tours, the group discussed ways to consider focussing the gaze and viewing the works from a distance as well as close up during the tour. The objective was, in particular, to pay attention to focussing the gaze on the way shapes, colours, lines and stories are presented on the surface of the work, which would, in turn, activate the visual cortex of the brain, as opposed to what passive skimming would do. Zeki (1999, 21) describes the process of visual perception as an active and holistic brain activity. The brain seeks information about the visual world, rejects some, then selects the essential information from all that is perceived. At the same time, the selected information is compared to information already stored in the memory, which gives the perceived image its shape.

This process is remarkably similar to what an artist goes through in the creative process. The visual areas of the brain process different aspects of what is seen, such as shape, colour and movement. The viewer arranges the parts of the complete work of art created by the artist in the right order, much in the same way as the artist did in the creation process. Both the artist of a work of art as well as its audience strive to locate and understand meaning.

The group members examined the pieces closely. They paused in front of them, as if listening to their hidden stories, watching what was visible and organising their perceptions. The art of Ilkka Lammi, in particular, inspired a discussion about the power of art to tell stories, about the methods of making art, and the methods employed by artists of different eras. In addition to this, the group conversed about what art is and how art is defined, as well as how art is evaluated.

DEFINING ART

According to Dewey (Alhanen 2013, 182), art can express something extremely profound about the ideals of human life. In his works (1934/1980), Dewey expressed a concern about art being in danger of becoming merely the property of museums, when disconnected from its original, experience-based environment to become elitist valuables or forms of elitist self-expression. In this state, art could only move a very small group of people, those initiated into the world of high culture. In Dewey's approach, art should be connected closely to people's daily experiences and the aesthetic experiences produced by art.

Aesthetic experiences entail a powerful moment of fulfilment. The aesthetic experience is a part of the natural rhythm between a living being and its environment, in which the individual, from time to time, loses balance and is forced to rebuild their relationship with their environment. Aesthetic experiences are significant in the development of experience, because they always change the ways in which we experience the world. (Dewey LW 10 (AE), 25; Alhanen 2013, 182) For







Dewey, the creation and perception of a work of art takes place in the rhythm of the development of experience, from its climax. The senses play a part in the process in which the individual participates directly in the surrounding world. The variety in the world becomes real through our senses. This information mediated by our senses, the material for experience, is a medium which enables our interaction with our environment. Segregation and examination of opposites takes place in the sensory interaction with our living environment. Reflective examination provides resistance and tension with more opportunities for experimentation and invention, which may also renew our actions and deepen and expand our thinking and emotions. The plans we have made for our lives are expanded and enriched, when the rhythms of struggle and fulfilment alternate as events become more and more complex. (Dewey 2010, 34)

Life-size stories are woven into symbolic paintings: colours of the fields, lines, brush strokes, bright images of houses and gardens. When describing the paintings, the memories revealed plenty of information that became visible as different customs, routines, practices and feelings. This is what the members in the *Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato* group shared about the experiences:





The 'Ilkka Lammi ja menneisyyden kaiku' exhibition, Salon taidemuseo, autumn 2013.





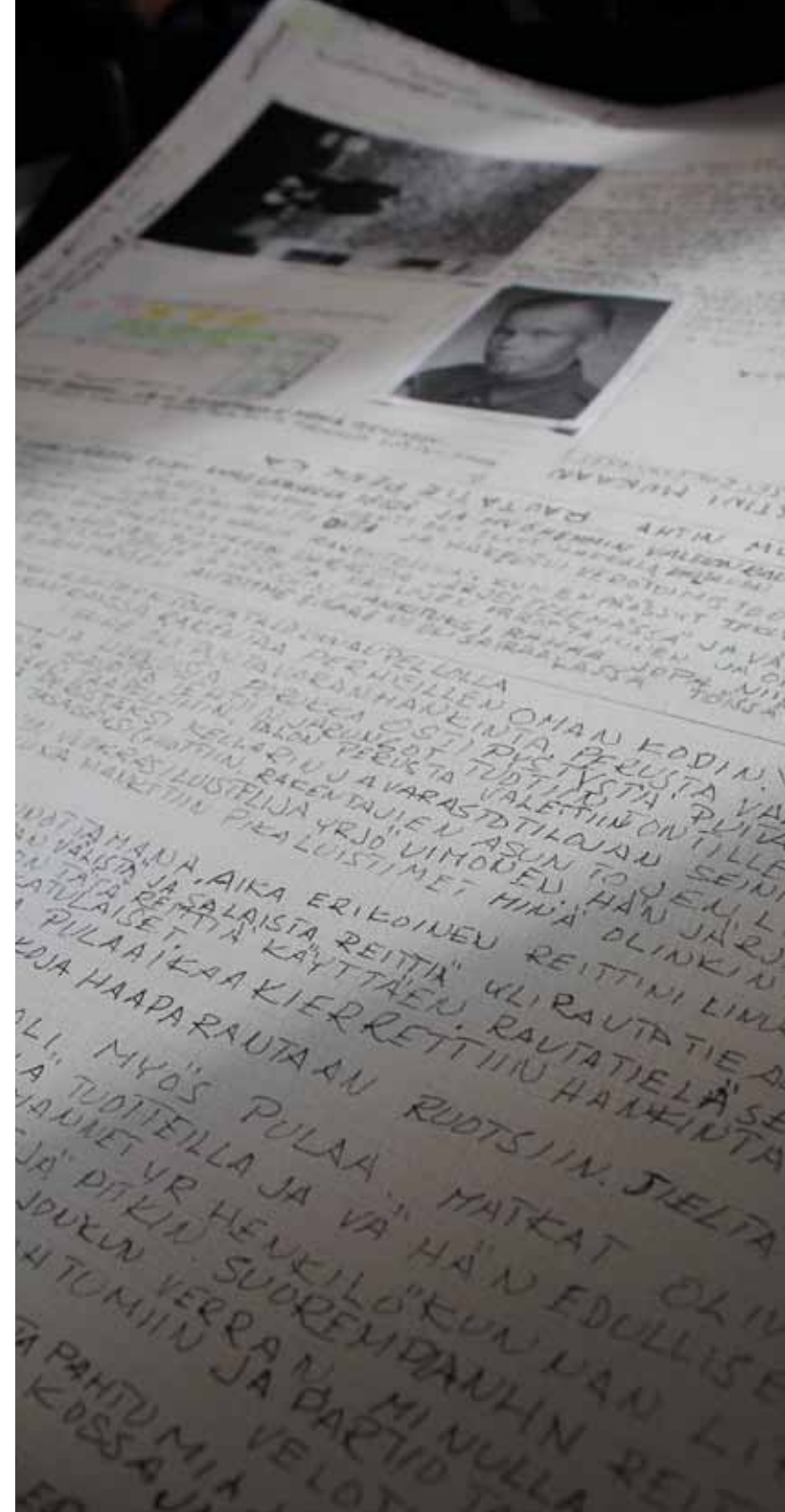
The railway was very important, it is present here too. But yes, I would say I was in close contact with the railway throughout my childhood. First it was just that I always wanted to look at trains, and sometimes I even got a beating for standing too close to the tracks. We did all these things, there was this bank that started from our garden towards the railway lower down, quite a lot lower actually, and then there was a ditch, and well, we of course went into the ditch because it was dry, and then we waited and tested how close to the train we dared to go. (Participant no. 11)

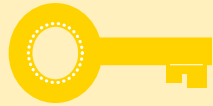
We put some one mark coins on the tracks, under the wheels and... (Participant no. 9)

The city had demolished the entire house. My grandpa was a kind of specialist mason. He travelled around Finland, he's built all the chimney-stacks in Finland. And there are many stories about him, many have told me later, something like "He's a weird one, that Taavetti, always working up there in the heights and never once scared", when another one said that "Well, he can't be afraid, because his glasses are always covered in plaster. He can't see a thing". But yes, my grandpa has built all these chimneys in this environment. (Participant no. 11)

TACIT KNOWLEDGE

During the process, understanding of the self and of others was constructed in the discussions, but also tacitly within the art activities. The silence did not reveal meanings as such, but the meanings were hidden and shrouded in the language of art, as a counterforce to the flattening force of words. (Blomstedt 192, 15; Malmivirta 2011, 230) In each meeting there was intense quiet concentration and focus on one's work. In the sharing phase, the participants noted the variety of ways they had used to tell their stories. This work during the art activities created the following key:





Key 3.
TACIT KNOWLEDGE

- Stories hidden in lines, colours and shapes
- Conceptual and sensory knowledge
- Intuitive knowledge

For Polanyi (1966, 4; Malmivirta 2011, 229), the fact that we know more than we can say is at the heart of tacit knowledge. In other words, we have plenty of awareness we cannot express verbally, but which is nevertheless visible as different customs, routines, practices and expertise. This so-called intuitive knowledge is passed on through active experiences. Tacit knowledge contains conceptual and sensory knowledge as well as knowledge gained through imagination. In the making and reception of art, things significant and important to the self are picked up from the mind's storage (please see Rauhala 2009).

EXPERIENCE AT THE HEART OF ART

The works of art constructed in the interaction of visual arts, photographs and the narratives of the participants in the Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato art activities, as well as the stories hidden in them, created in the narrative process a space which was not occupied by emptiness. All the diverse acts we participate in during our lives can be organised on this spacious and extensive stage. In that moment of narration and examination, time is not an endless and cohesive flux or a collection of momentary points in time. Rather, the event can be described as having a repeated pulse, a movement directed forwards and backwards, with an alternating resistance and the implementation and fulfilment of organised and organising flexibility. Dewey (2010, 35) describes this process as the organisation of growth and maturation.

It was feet first back then. Do you still have these, notebooks like this? There were these people on the ship, from the maritime administration, who wrote some verses in my notebook and, and then, there was no sauna here at the station at first, so the sailors thought of the lighthouse, or lights, as we call them in the lake district, and you know what they are made of? Iron. Strong, strong iron, and so they built a sauna, a lighthouse sauna, and there was that thing for your clothes where you could leave them, and the sauna heat was really good, that's for sure. And then Armi Harmarberg wrote that "Mirja is a swimmer girl, rows her boat on the Saimaa, then runs to the warmth of the lighthouse sauna". And here then, this is a proper historical ship, and here, what tsar was it back then, Alexander or something, I don't remember exactly, but it was. (Participant no. 12)



Sharing experiences entailed telling the others about yourself and identifying with the others' narratives. We could also talk of the construction of narrative identity, the process in which the individual connects to phenomena, things and other people through meaningful experiences. In this context, meaning refers to both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of experience. Social intercourse becomes meaningful when we reach that which goes on in the mind. What is important to us and others, and what happens inside us, reinforces trust and leaves room for reciprocity. (Malmivirta 2011, 235) During the narratives, the group listened intently and commented on the story with personal experiences related to the topic, which enriched the narratives, making them even 'our stories'. Social interaction and being a part of this particular community gained a special meaning. Social experiences can be used to promote the creation of stories or narratives (Siegel 1999; please see also Madore 2010).



So, I found this font, which I think is quite nice, and I've installed it on my computer. So, this is the portfolio of Maj-Riitta, even though everyone calls me Maj, but this is my name, which is because when I was born during the war, well, during the truce really, so there was a group baptising at the hospital, and my mother says that I was supposed to be Maritta, but the priest wrote it like this. That's how I became Maj-Riitta, but then, when I always have to spell it out, I started to leave Riitta out when I was a teenager, so that I don't always have to tell everyone to spell my name with a J and a hyphen. Then it works just fine. And this is what I've named this, 'Childhood landscapes and events as drawn from my memory'. (Participant no. 13)





KONSERTTITALO

Matti

Pentti

1941-1945

Kokkosen muistokirja 1941-1945

LÄPPINEN

Pentti

Pentti

Sipilä

Kari

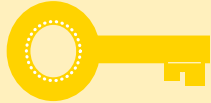






SOCIAL INTERACTION

The sharing phase emphasised the importance of social interaction. Being part of a group and sense of participation were experienced as very meaningful in the development work of this service model too. This is the key constructed in this phase:



- Key 4.
SOCIAL INTERACTION
- Belonging to a community
 - Sense of participation
 - Sharing stories and experiences

The group members experienced the sharing of stories significant to themselves with the other group members as meaningful. By putting your life into words and images and telling others about it, you can at the same time mediate verbal and non-verbal messages to be received by your audience. Stories need an audience in order to gain meaning. By identifying with the others' stories, interaction, too becomes meaningful.

7.2. Human growth

Examining your experiences with the means of visual arts, photographs and narratives is growth that takes place in the changing organisation of time (Dewey 2010, 35). Growth means that there are intervals of pausing and rest, endings, in the varying series of changes that takes place in a human life, and these will, in turn, become starting points for new development processes. For one group member, the process of making art opened all the locks of the past. The abundance of experience required a large piece of paper and wide-ranging movements.

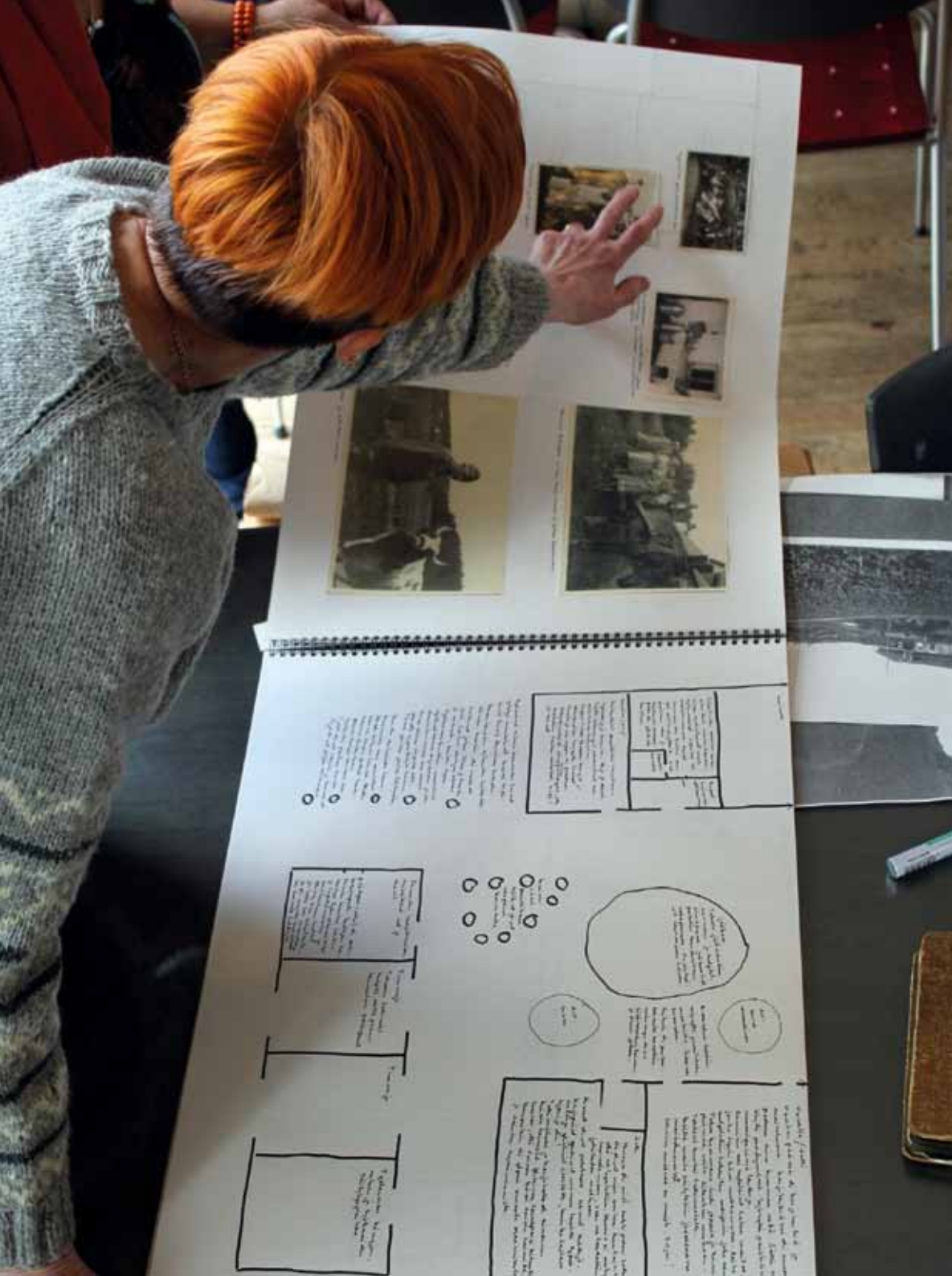
This moment of transformation into lines and action could be described with Dewey's (2010, 35) flash which lights up the dark landscape of its maker, allowing them to recognise the objects in it in a blinding realisation. War-time memories are stirred, the movements of the bombers and the experiences of panic-stricken people running to safety are translated onto paper. For the participant sharing these experiences, the recognition of these objects is not in itself just a moment of that time. Rather, it is a climax, concentrated into one single point in the course of slow, maturing events related to the participant's life experiences. This momentary pause is a sudden instant of a separate climax, manifested in the continuum of organised and temporal experience, which has been unravelled from its process. The photograph on the left depicts a moment of making abundant memories visible by drawing:

And what this process has given me... I had somehow wanted to forget everything. Yes, I didn't really want to remember anything at all. I had a terribly traumatic relationship with my mother, and all that... Somehow I wanted to shut it all away, and now, when I was making this, it was the war first and foremost that emerged. I've cried so much because of the war. (Participant no. 10)

Just like the form of art manifested in the visual narratives of the *What do I want to remember from my life?* service model participants, the form of art manifested in the works of art created by the participants in the *this* service model – combining art, childhood environments and architecture (2010, 35) – has evolved into a skill for deciphering what in the organisation of space and time is already predestined at each turn of each of our life experiences. One of our participants continues her story by highlighting important aspects of her narrative:

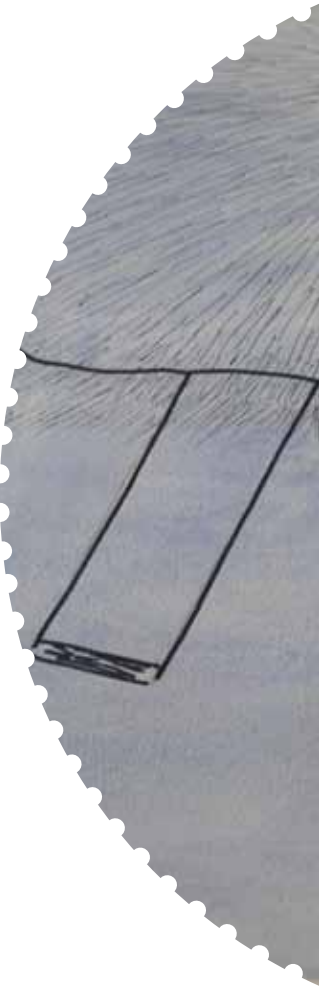
Yes. Well, this first page is kind of a general picture of my home, and Kari made it for me, because I didn't much like thinking about where north is and where south is, no. And when we showed this, or these works, to my son, or our son, a week ago, he was really pleased with both. And he of course wanted something unreasonable, like that we would have to continue with this. Well, this one is mine, this is a picture from the beginning of the 1900s, about what it looked like, and this is my grandfather and grandmother at that time, when they had arrived, and this, this is another picture taken at the beginning of the century. By Lake Karviaistensalmi. Well, yes. Yes. And then I've drawn the the layout of the main building, and for each room, I've written down the stories and people from that room. And then when the war came, then after the war, and then, when 70 immigrants were put in emergency housing in Karvainen and at the same time, all the men were at the front, so the prisoners were working, prisoners of war, so there were also many prisoners there. Which means that I grew up amidst quite a crowd. And then I have pictures of all the outbuildings, and here are stories about all of those, and then there is, which I think is lovely, one page about the working culture from before the war. (Participant no. 10)

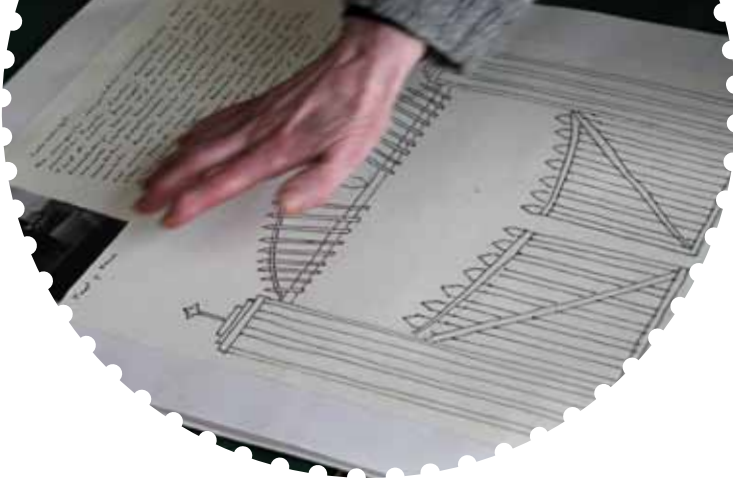




And this page is filled with nostalgia. This is Pavel, a prisoner of war, and this is my little brother Hans. And this is the gate these prisoners of war, or Pavel at least, built, and the gate separated the garden from the outside courtyard. And there are stories from the main building to the shore, and here is some personal history in the sense that these are the only pictures... (Participant no. 10)

...And these are the heroes of our lives. And then there's this photograph. It isn't really, or I don't know, but I sort of tried to include the graphic arts thing here. I mean this is the big maple tree, which stood right there next to the granary. And then there was the swing. And I always sat and swung in that swing, and I thought that I have to connect this to this tree somehow, the loneliness. Because when I was very little, this garden was full of all kinds of children, but when the immigrants left, so did the kids. So I was very lonely. (Participant no. 10)





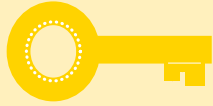
CHANGES IN HABITS AND ROUTINES

In making art, seeing and perception are much more than simply recognising objects. In the art making process, something the viewer has experienced personally is always present in the ongoing and the recognising process. The past travels in the present, expanding and deepening its content. Art receives its primitive form in the basic processes of life (Dewey 2010, 35), which the participants have depicted in their work. In these illustrated chains of life events, a natural stimulus has become the bearer of meaning, and motor responses tools for expression and communication.

I've wondered about this, too: my brother was born in 1938, and he is like he is, and I was born in 1945, when dad was working on the coast, and we've had a completely different relationship. I mean that the generation that lived through the war, already as a child, when the fathers were away, and the mothers had to fight for their lives and family and everything. What I mean is, it's clear that it's a completely different starting point. And well, it is likely that little by little our children, or the children of their children, start to... and have started to already, to find out about their roots, and things like this are bound to come up. That you have been shutting off some things, and of course the things you shut off, they came back to you, twice as big. (Participant no. 12)



The group members compiled folders or portfolios of their memories, and attached photographs of significant childhood environments and people in them. They added text and drew floor plans, maps and routes which they had used to get to different places. Emotional landscapes were also well represented in the compiled portfolios. For one of the participants, the portfolio turned into a large book, which was given to the participant's son as a memory heritage of the family. Another portfolio was beautifully named 'Lapsuuteni maisemat ja tapahtumat muistojen lokeroista ammennettuna' ('My childhood landscapes and events as drawn from my memory'). The memories of each participant received a worthy portfolio, which the participants were proud share with the others in the sharing phase. The process continued even after the project. This is just the beginning, the participants said when the project ended. In the process phase, the following key was created:



Key 8.

CHANGES IN HABITS AND ROUTINES

- Experimental learning
- Experimental art learning
- Significant experiences and changes in the approach to them
- Human growth and unity, changes in identity

CONSTRUCTING MEANING IN LIFE AND THE CONTINUOUS CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY

The visual narrative compiled from personal life and significant life experiences, memories and events is a type of narrative of the self, a collage of identity. It tells the story of personal values and valuations whose background or origin affects identity, which is in a constant state of change. In addition to this, identity refers to the special mode of human existence, a human being's experience of himself and life, the personal identity in the meaning of selfhood (Ricour 1992, 118–120; Heikkinen 2001, 117; Malmivirta 2011, 232). The autobiographical work with art in the *Yellow Cottage* and a *Patch of Potato* enactment also set in motion a profound exploration of matters related to the participants' life histories. The group considered the atmosphere safe, which allowed room for following the personal and others' narratives, which, in turn, allowed one's own personal identity to be processed. During the process, new perspectives were discovered when returning to the childhood photographs and the stories hidden in them, which moulded the stories as well as the story-tellers. Therefore, identity is undergoing constant change and its organisation takes place with the means of narrative self-expression, which is what the forms of narrative in the art activities of the *Yellow Cottage* and a *Patch of Potato* enactment represent. Events in the life lived were given an external, visible shape, metaphorical or symbolic expressions, which, at best, transformed even the more difficult experiences into significant experiences (Sava 2004, 55; Malmivirta 2011, 233) Shaping identity is always about creating and building a new relationship with the expressions one



constructs of oneself. The fact that the narrative of the self is constantly moving is vital for the construction of identity. Our conception of ourselves and our lives is not something stable, but it is constantly rebuilt as new experiences network with previous experiences. (Giddens 1991, 54; Malmivirta 2011, 233)

Childhood and the diversity of life during childhood were organised from the perspective of the present, and, just as in the *What do I want to remember from my life?* enactment, the participants compiled their lifeworlds, manifested in their experiences, by combining visual arts, childhood photographs, photographs of childhood environments and their experiences from the course of their personal life history. With the help of the exploratory art activities that deconstruct, clarify and reconstruct meaning, the participants were able to cross conventional boundaries of their worlds and reach something new in their personal history (Malmivirta 2011). Dewey (LW 10, 19–26; Ahlanen 2013, 72–73) explains that these struggles are necessary for the development of the individual's experience. Situations occurred within conventional modes of action and the the individual's new relationship with the environment and the situation, born from struggle, are what comprise the rhythm and shape typical to living and experiencing. Going through these phases reinforces and enriches the functional ability of the individual, the living being. For Dewey (LW 10, 20–21), matters being repaired as life is enriched is never simply a return to the previous state, for life is enriched only if it succeeds in passing through states of difference and resistance. If the individual is not, from time to time, alienated from his habitual course of action, his life becomes mere survival. And life is enriched when the individual receives, by means of temporary marginalisation, a better balance with his living environment.





Joen ja kauppapaikan Saito



Helena: *Was this a good way to go through this?*

Yes. I mean, I'm really thankful for this course. I would never have, I mean I always say I might, but then I would always have chosen the main house and started to make pictures, but I would never have done this. And our son is so thankful for me having made this. This is so... Thank you all, this has been just fantastic. (Participant no. 10)

You really have created the atmosphere of trust that we have here. So that you can open up and feel free. (Participant no. 12)

In the processes of the two service model enactments presented here, art seems to be what Dewey (2010, 37) describes as living and concrete proof of man's ability to consciously record, at the level of meaning, the connection between sensing, needs, stimuli and action typical to living beings. The group members were fully committed to the art activities and made conscious decisions, regulating their processes of making the invisible visible by selecting and analysing that which came into view and took on a visible form. Observations from different angles, implementation and, by utilising various means of art, skills were moulded and enriched in many ways in the experience of human growth and integrity.



SATU-MAARIA MÄKIPURO'S EXPERIENCES AS AN INSTRUCTOR IN THE ART ACTIVITIES OF THE YELLOW COTTAGE AND A PATCH OF POTATO GROUP

Artist Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro (2014) describes her experiences and observations from coaching the group as follows:

"I thought it was wonderful that the participants were able to put their lives into a book. How fantastic to be able to look at your life like that... Examining your history by organising things and exploring and observing them as larger entities, the way they are interconnected, it must have created a tremendous experience. You start to respect life and the wondrous journey each of us takes. It must be a tremendous emotion to be able to create a historical account or a part of it just for yourself, from yourself. You get to observe yourself both from the inside and outside, and then create something that is just your thing". Satu analyses her experience further: "The images constructed acted as the language of telling and examining your life in a way that suits you. As in all new ways of acting, also this contained the element of learning something new. The Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato enactment was about learning the language of art, in order to be able to make past experiences visible. The art museum café and the Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato enactment project carried out there created a serene space in itself, for making the past visible and for seeing the things that could be processed further with new eyes through the means of art. Processing matters related one's personal life created a profound understanding of one's existence, while it also promoted the integrity of one's identity.

For some participants, writing about the forms of language seemed to be easier to control than working with the visual imagery. The process of creating images is more mystical. It brings a vision from the past, to be experienced powerfully at the emotional level. When making childhood environments visible, the environments became for many participants, as the process went on, more than just environments; they brought to life the people and culture of the time. Often the work progressed quietly, the participants absorbed deep in the memories, interrupted every now and then only with a sudden need to share an experience or listen to someone else's story. In these situations, us instructors assumed new roles, those of active participants in a genuine dialogue and of capable listeners. The human being, the story-teller, was never left alone. The visual narrative interwoven with one's childhood environment acts as a silent, metaphorical story between the self and the other and, on a more general level, as a cultural story of the time of the participants' childhood. Understanding of the self and the other was constructed in the shared conversations with the group as well as in the art activities carried out quietly alone.













THE STAGE OF MEMORIES

8. The stage of memories (Muistojen näyttämö)

Suvi Kivelä

The group was instructed by Tiina Puranen, Helena Malmivirta and Suvi Kivelä.

The stage of memories service model activates brain and memory functions with the help of paper theatre as well as old photographs, newspapers and magazines and other visual material. The stage of memories takes the participants back to their memories by using old photographs and helps the participants to share these memories with others. The participants write a script based on their memories and transform it into a paper theatre play, by making the dolls and sets, casting roles and identifying with the stories of others. Finally, the plays are performed to an audience.

The third enactment was planned and executed in cooperation with puppet theatre artist Tiina Puranen from the RahtiTeatteri theatre. In order to achieve the set goals, a plan for the eight meetings between 19 September and 21 November 2013 was made. This plan contained the content of the meetings, the methods used, material acquisition and tasks planned to be carried out in between the sessions. The plan built a framework for the implementation of *The stage of memories* project without compromising the flexibility of the project, as is suitable when following the approaches of action research and reflective thinking. Information about the group was spread at the Aurala fair for senior citizens, local newspapers, notice boards of wellbeing centres, Kotikunnas and through senior citizens' associations and the local associations of the Martha Organization. Five participants of the first enactment joined this group as well; they were already interested in art and ready to accept a new challenge. In addition to this, one man took part in the second meeting, but he did not join the group permanently.

ORIENTATION FOR THE WORK PROCESS, LIFE STORIES AND A SHARED TIME PERIOD

The participants were familiarised with the process by first telling the others about themselves and listening to the others' talk about themselves. Everyone shared things they considered important, such as the kind of work they had done, hob-







bies and interests, and what kinds of art-related endeavours they had previously engaged in during their lives. All kinds of things about childhood in general, interests and skills since childhood, arts and crafts, the importance of exercise in youth and childhood (such as swimming lessons and skiing competitions), memories in the meaningful childhood environments and customs and etiquette of the time, such as “jumping off your bike so that you could curtsy”, were shared in the life stories. The participants’ parents and experiences related to them turned out to be meaningful to many. When talking about childhood, the hard labour of the time was also brought up, such as shared experiences from working in sugar beet fields.

Yes, if we were laying in the sun for a bit, we would hear right away “Girls, come over here”.
(Participant no. 1)

It was the same with us, all work and no play. And then there was competition too, who had picked the most sugar beets. (Participant no. 3)

The participants also shared stories about their children and grandchildren. For many, being a parent or grandparent is significant part of their identity, and life was described as a continuum of generations. In conversations about childhood dolls and paper dolls, the clothes made for them, collecting printed scraps and poems, thoughts shifted towards the focus of *The stage of memories* enactment.

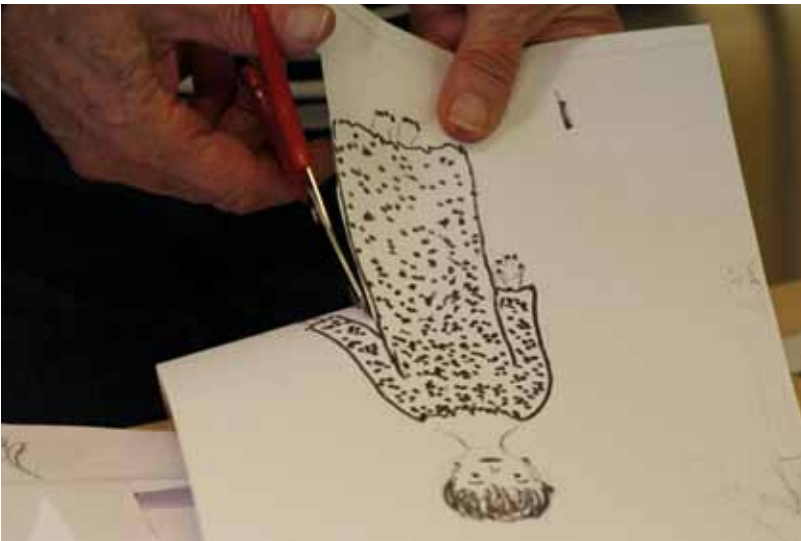
THE IDEA AND TECHNICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF MUISTOJEN NÄYTTÄMÖ

Tiina Puranen

The stage of memories process brings up the participants’ memories of a significant event, through personal photographs and the means of paper theatre. The group members bring with them photographs of the memories they want to share with the group. Everyone takes their turn to present the photograph of their choice and tell the others about the memory connected to it. The group discussed the memory, and other group members can share personal experiences related to, for instance, the time period of the memory. The participants write down their memories, after which the story is adapted into a script. The participants recall certain things, such as what was said at the time, what life was like, who was the original event shared with, how was everyone dressed, and what the living environment was like. The scripts need not be long, they can contain just one scene, short memories, or clusters of several memories. Once the scripts are completed, the paper theatre puppets, sets and props are







made. The puppets can be drawn or scanned and printed directly from the photographs. Another option is cut to puppets from magazines. If the images are scanned and printed from old black and white photographs, they can be coloured or adorned by gluing fabric on them. This way, the colours of the dress in the picture can be brought back to mind.

Cardboard is glued behind the puppets, along with the stands and supports required for them to stand upright. Finally, sticks for controlling the puppets are attached, either horizontally in the direction of the base or vertically against the base. The direction of the stick is selected according to the desired movement of the puppet. For example, if the puppet should turn around on its axis, the stick must be installed upright.

The paper theatre stage is simple. The stage used on the course is a miniature version of full-scale theatre stage. The cut-out scene is at the front, and a curtain can also be attached. The stage itself is about 50 cm wide and 40 cm deep, and it can be used on top of a table. The backdrops will be attached to a plate behind the stage. There is a small lamp above the stage opening. The backdrops can be painted or drawn, and magazine cut-outs and photographs can be attached to them. The stage opening, its distance from the backdrop and the light create an illusion of tridimensionality. Furthermore, tridimensionality can be enhanced with two-dimensional props set on the stage, such as trees, houses or furniture. The paper theatre stage can also be made from a cardboard box, for instance (for instructions, please see Takametsän kylä instructions, 2014).

Once the puppets and the stage are ready, it is time to start the rehearsals. For this purpose, the participants looked for suitable music or other soundscapes to sup-





port the performance. Due to the small size of the stage, there can be a maximum of two puppeteers. In addition to this, someone is selected to manage the sound reproduction. The most important thing in puppeteering is to focus on the puppet and its movements. The eye should be focused on the puppet nearly all of the time, transferring the thoughts and emotions of the puppeteer to the puppet.

In the rehearsals, the other group members act as directors. They sit in the audience and give advice on visibility, rhythm, audibility and many other issues that might affect the course of the performance, though not the content of the play itself. Rehearsals are continued until the performance seems to run smoothly.

Because the stage of the paper theatre is so small, the audience must be limited in numbers, which suits the nature of the intimate performances. After the show, the performances are discussed with the audience: did they stir any personal memories or other emotions?









8.1. Towards a freer self-expression with drama exercises

The stage of memories project introduced the group to the world of theatre by using drama education methods as warm-up exercises in the second, third and fourth meetings, until the group's attentions were focused solely on the paper theatre. Reinforcing social interaction; developing the observational, perceptive, concentrational and decision-making abilities of the participants, as well as promoting creative and reflective thinking were the central elements in the exercises. With the help of the various exercises, and afterwards, by discussing the exercises, the group learned about working with drama, strived to break free from their conventional ways of doing things, and finding new modes of thinking and acting. The next section describes two exercises and their objectives.

THE BUS STOP

Tiina Puranen

The objective of this exercise was to reinforce empathy and social interaction and to enhance attention and visual perception abilities. In the exercise, the participants learn to recognise and discover different emotional states within themselves, to change their emotional state and to communicate with the others in different emotional states, based on their emotional memory.

Four chairs are placed on the floor, to serve as a bus stop. Four group members stand at the side in a queue. They enter the bus stop one after the other. The audience gets to decide the first emotional state, in which the first person of the four must enter the bus stop and sit on the chair. This person may talk to themselves, remembering their emotional state. Once the first person has been on the bus stop for a sufficient amount of time, it's time for the next person to enter. Again, the audience gets to decide their emotional state, which now also becomes the emotional state of the first person at the bus stop. The first and second person start to talk to each other, both in the emotional state of the second person.

Once these two have spent a sufficient amount of time together, the third person enters the scene. Again, the audience sets the emotional state, which will now become the emotional state of all three people at the bus stop. The procedure is repeated when the fourth person steps into the bus stop.

Once the fourth person feels that he has been at the bus stop for long enough, he exits the scene. Now the emotional state of the three remaining people change to that of the third person, until the third person decides to leave the bus stop. The emotional state of the two remaining people is that of the second person to have entered the bus stop. The exercise ends when the first person to have entered the scene is left alone at the bus stop and decides to leave.



EXERCISE: "I'M A TREE"

Tiina Puranen

The purpose of this exercise is to get to know the group and to activate brain and memory functions with a task that emphasises cooperation. The objective is to observe the action of others and to adapt one's thoughts and actions according to these observations. Another objective is to promote the participants' observation, reaction, decision-making, creative thinking and reflection abilities.

The exercise begins by someone entering the stage and saying "I'm a tree". The next person enters and says something like "I'm a bird that sits in the tree", after which the next person enters and says something new. Once everybody is in the scene, the image created is taken down, and the next person may start a new game by saying, for example, "I'm a boat".

In these warm-up exercises, the participants really threw themselves into the world of imaginary play in which everyone adds a new element to the picture they created together. The "I'm a tree" exercise came up both in the questionnaire and the group interview, in which the group reminisced about the project together and brought new themes to the discussion as more and more recollections emerged. The challenging part in this exercise was letting go of habitual ways of acting:

I remember that tree. It has stayed in my mind. Everyone took part. (Participant no. 4)

That was fun, I remember when I went there... I was the dog that peed on the tree. Then, there was the one like that, you had to think of something to go with that tree that had something to do with the tree. I remember that someone was a student and you said that you are the thoughts of that student. (Participant no. 3)





That time when everybody was something. It kept adding up. (Participant no. 1)

But it was just that, that I thought it was so... That I couldn't think of anything which... I simply didn't have any ideas. (Participant no. 5)

It's weird when you can't think of anything. Like oh dear, I'm up next. And then, once you were nearly there, you thought of something, like I'm this or that... Many times you figured it out just at the last minute. (Participant no. 1)

At first, creative thinking and using the imagination was difficult, but as the exercise continued, the participants got more and more excited and experienced their insights as rewarding. The "I'm a tree" exercise allowed the group to let go of the rigid reality with its norms and to move towards the playful world of theatre and improvisation.

The warm-up exercise in *The stage of memories* enactment opened the doors to the world of theatre with the means of play: improvisation, acting in different roles and using your imagination. The playfulness of drama was clearly present in these exercises, and the participants had to be brave enough to throw themselves into the game, letting go of the stiff behaviour and norms of normal daily life. The exercises had clear rules, which enable the action to take place in a dynamic interaction between the participants (cf. Vygotsky 1930/1995; 1978; Lindqvist 1995). An essential aspect was to observe the others, to react quickly and to adapt one's action to the imagined situation. The playfulness of drama was also present in the making and rehearsing of the plays. (Heikkinen 2002)

EXAMINING EMOTIONS AS A TOOL OF DRAMA

Examining matters closely, observing the actions of others and pursuing target-oriented activities are all important factors in drama education and dramatic working processes. Experimenting and reflective thinking, learning from listening to others and creating shared meaningful experiences is essential. With the help of the world of drama, the matters processed change form, due to the large spectrum of chances to learn and tools of perception: in addition to spoken language and logical thinking, emotions are at play. (Heikkinen 2002, 120)

In drama, the significance of emotions is particularly pronounced. Indeed, drama can be used as a journey into the world of emotion. Emotions are experienced in real time, and they tell us who we are and what this means to us. Emotions are the basis of our values, and they organise the meanings we give to objects. Emotions are highly personal, and everyone must discover them by themselves, they cannot be taught. However, with dramatic exercises, it is possible to learn how to seek emotions and channel your strength through them. (Kujasalo 1994)

In drama, the significance of roles is central. In *The stage of memories* enactment, roles are used in the paper theatre through the puppets and in the roles and emotional states of the exercises. When in character, the participant must be active: acting in character allows for experimenting with something unfamiliar. The bus stop exercise and the plays based on the experiences of the participants in *The stage of memories* enactment enabled different kinds of empathy and emotion experiments. Indeed, the ability to touch and move both the performers and the audience and to reinforce and questions values, cultures and identifications is what is significant in drama. (Heikkinen 2002, 121; Bolton 1986, 218–219) In *The stage of memories* performance, the empathy and emotions of the audience manifested as laughter at the turning points and silence in the scary or exciting scenes. The audience consisted of the children of a near-by day-care centre and elderly people from the Kotikunnas day ward for patients suffering from dementia.

In the drama exercises of *The stage of memories* project, the participants experimented with rapid shifts of emotional states and jumping into new roles. Rapid changing of roles was also important in the rehearsals and performances of the plays. Everyone was allowed to try different roles and to act as presenters in the performances. In the interviews, the participants contemplated emotions and how they absorbed them



from others, as well as whether it is possible to learn to recognise your own and others' emotions through practice. This is particularly important in voluntary work, or indeed any work related to helping others. The participants felt that their occupational background could be useful in processing emotions or in their approach to them.

But that's true, that thing about emotions, that when you go someplace and there's this negative... (Participant no. 3)

Yes, you can feel it when you get there. Even though you don't know anyone, but when you go there, you just sense it. Or I don't know. (Participant no. 2)

How do you get the strength that you can, I mean, that you don't get into it? (Participant no. 3)

It must be my work history too that... Yes, I know how to deal with... that I'm with this person now, I see what he needs. And then I leave, and that's that, I go home. I have my own stuff there. I've had to do that at work, when there were people who were ill, and when I left, I wondered how they would manage. But when you were there... You just had to. You just had to learn it. (Participant no. 2)

But yes, emotional states like that are transferred so easily. You should be a bit separate or above or below... I mean, stay outside. So that you can really see the situation. So that you wouldn't be lost in the jungle, not knowing what's what. That would be a good skill. (Participant no. 1)



8.2. The significance of drama to lifelong growth and learning

In *The stage of memories* project, pedagogic thinking is linked to pedagogic drama, the effect of which is based on (O'Neill & Lambert 1991, 11) active identification with imagined roles and situations in which the participants learn to explore objects and events and their relationships. Dramatic activities do not require fancy theatrical skills, but rather surrendering and absorption in an imaginary world, which can be built by using dreams as well as knowledge and experiences from reality. Drama education can utilise the wide spectrum of play, drama and theatre with a pedagogic approach. Work can be based on text, improvisation or a future performance, as long as it is participatory and activates participation. The plays are written and exercises carried out, explored and acted together. The objective is to broaden horizons and open the eyes to explore the world. (Heikkinen 2002)

In working with drama, a bridge is built between theatre, personal growth and learning, the ethic and the aesthetic, and the individual and the group (Heikkinen 2002). Learning takes place when the participants commit to the thematic content of the work and to exploring it. In this project, the participants were committed to the themes of the exercises as well as to deepening their chosen memory with the means of theatre, visual arts and music. Here, exploring refers to absorbing oneself in the memory visible in and behind the photograph: the environment and situation in which it was taken, the emotions experienced at the time and even the way society was back then, compared to the present moment. Opportunities for growth emerge when analogies between the fictional world and the social reality are created. Dramatic literacy evolves once the participants become more familiar with the language and form of theatre. Aesthetic and artistic learning as well as growth into the world of drama and art take place in the same process. Drama is compared to play and playfulness, which are not only the property of children. (Heikkinen 2002)

Yes, there was some playing and games here, too. Playing for grown-ups. (Participant no. 5)

It wasn't all that serious all the time. (Participant no. 3)



In drama, adults are allowed to immerse themselves into play and therefore, abandon habitual ways of acting. According to Vygotsky (1930/1995; 1978), learning and development take place when an individual is exposed to the effects of the environment. In drama, we act in fictional situations with the help of our imagination and in *The stage of memories* project, in the relived memories. In accordance with Vygotsky, imagination is significant as a form of consciousness. Consciousness attaches meaning, content, thought and feeling to an emotion. At the same time, the imaginary process is a process of interpretation which contains several changes, differences, regroupings, summations and exaggerations, in other words, active interpreting and giving meaning as well as connecting new things with previous experiences. Consciousness can be described as a dynamic, changing state which reflects the surrounding culture, both in terms of content and form. (Lindqvist 1998, 67)

The serious playfulness of drama allows participants to take chances and throwing themselves into the unknown, experimenting and playing with things that are not possible in real life. Any differences and different perspectives should, therefore, be seen as resources. Learning and the action must have meaning to the participants; they must have a plan and a purpose, but the instructors must also be open to other perspectives. The essential aspect in the instruction of the activities is the view that each individual has the resources to change his behaviour and approach to the world and therefore, become an empowered actor. (Heikkinen 2002, 141)

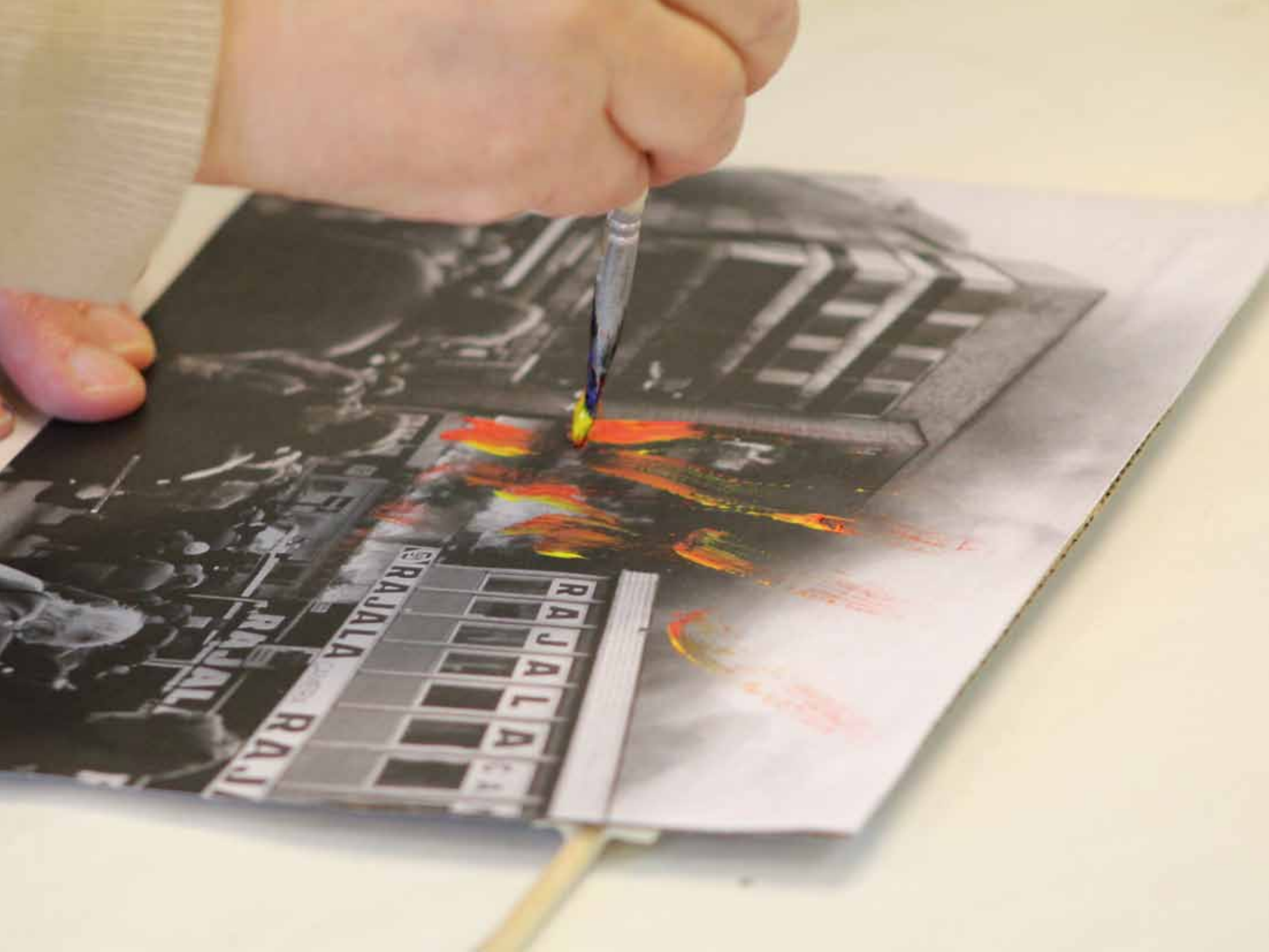
In *The stage of memories* enactment, the participants deconstructed significant life experiences and memories connected to their photographs with the means of paper theatre. The possibility to change meaning and learn something new were central aspects in this work. Constant decision making and creation of a shared reality takes place in the process of processing the memories. During this process, the memories evolved into scripts, puppets and operational environments with their sets and props, and finally, into rehearsals and performances for a live audience. In the scripts, the participants sketched the course of events, combined funny incidents and created a coherent narrative of the way things had happened. The group processed the scripts together, contemplating the text and writing lines for the characters. In the rehearsals the lines changed and evolved. The plays started to take on a life of their own, becoming more rich and lively in the shared processes of imagination. (Lindqvist 1995, 51; 1998, 68; Heikkinen 2002)



In *The stage of memories* project, the tools of drama education help to create a space of possibilities for constructing new meanings (cf. Dewey 1934/1980; 2010). In other words, it is a question of creating a mental and fictional space in which creative thinking and activities can be executed. The significance of play is manifested indirectly through artistic experiences and making art. (Heikkinen 2002) Playing can be compared to art: play, too, reflects reality at a profound level and moulds meanings. Art has an aesthetic form: a certain framework is shaped for drama, and the action takes place in the dynamic interaction of different rules, in which emotion plays a significant role. Art develops abstract thinking. In drama, an imaginary and fictional situation, in which all action takes place in the interaction of imagination and reality, is created. (Lindqvist 1995; 1998.) In drama, social interaction exists only as references and points of reference, even if we act in a fictional framework which is based on imagination. Through drama and play we get to process things we want to explore in the reality or world we already know. (Heikkinen 2002)

Forms of participatory theatre (please see Korhonen 2009) are a form of social play in a more pronounced way than traditional performances on stage: in art-pedagogic drama activities, the enabling of active participation and participatory activities, performance, watching and discussion is central. In addition to this, the aesthetic experience is significant in drama: both concern rules and forms that define the actions and interpretations. Furthermore, drama and play provide an opportunity for processing more serious themes, which may be too difficult to bring up for discussion as such. Drama allows the participants to act free of the norms of social reality and to undertake ethical experiments, and to examine, after their return to the social reality, the emotions and reflection these experiments have stirred in connection with each participant's lifeworld. (Heikkinen 2002, 60–61, 68; Toivanen 2009) According to Kujasalo (1994), it is precisely the transfers from the space of the here and now to the fictional state which contain the potential for learning.





RAJAJALA
RAJAJALA

8.3. Experiential learning in drama activities

In *The stage of memories* project, exploring and learning are about taking control of the past and creating something new. The experiential aspect is central. The kind of experiences the audience has had, the kind of experiences they encounter, and how they approach these experiences are what is essential in the process. The experiences can reinforce the expectations of the audience or shake them and create new experiences, which can then be compared with the old ones. Drama education often strives to confront new experiences which shake us, are dramatic and contain a certain tension. (Heikkinen 2002, 71)

In the work in *The stage of memories* project, the participants were given certain homework assignments to be performed or contemplated upon between the meetings. These assignments were significant in tuning the participants into their personal reminiscing process and stirring new thoughts and ways of thinking, as they were in the other enactment groups as well. The purpose of these assignments was to keep a certain tension between the meetings and to direct thoughts to next meeting and the preparation for it. The first assignment in *The stage of memories* project was to select a photograph and to write down a memory related to it in a notebook. In *The stage of memories* project, all participants chose a photograph and a related story which contained exciting turns or particularly powerful memories with a broad-ranging spectrum of emotions.

And I was like, I knew right away when I had the pictures. (Participant no. 5)

Yes, I started to look through an old photo album and then, when I found these photographs I thought that this could be something, there were so many – Or at least, I remembered something about them. Because you don't always remember what happened in all of them. (Participant no. 4)

I thought that, when you had to pick something, I thought of a memory that would work, and what came to my mind was... When you wake in the morning hours, or evening, to a terrible clatter, and you are home alone with the boy. Or I didn't know if he was home. Yes, and it was like, I wasn't scared, but it was scary. (Participant no. 2)

And for me it was, it was the one where my life was really in danger. It really was like that, they were really scary and then they came at us, you know, it started to do something like this and then we ran. I have never, I mean I was all white and like... We were both shaking and... and then I thought that those young bulls would never do anything. I had never even realised that they could be so terribly wild. Because I thought, yes, I'm used to them, you just shoo them a little, say "go away", and they do. But it wasn't like that... (Participant no. 3)

Yes, and what's funny, I've been in exactly the same situation as you have. We were on this small island and didn't notice it at first, we rowed a boat there, and when we walked around, we saw that was a huge herd of

bull calves there. And then, we didn't know how to get away, so we went around, very far like this and sucked our tummies in, to get away... (Participant no. 4)

Each participant wrote a personal story, which was then adapted into a script in groups of two or three people. The scripts contained lines, and roles were cast for all members of the group. Going through and processing the memory brought it alive and at the same time, evoked other memories. One memory stirred another, and so on. Surrendering to reminiscing was meaningful, and through sharing memories with others, the participants got attention and an audience for their memory, which made the memory a shared experience with which the others could identify. (Please see also Hohenthal-Antin 2009, 23–29)

The memories were related to youth or adulthood, and involved children or other significant subjects often connected to adulthood, such as work and family:

I mean, I do have all sorts of memories from adulthood. But perhaps you don't want to share them in so much detail on the stage there. I mean that memories from youth or childhood, they are kind of lighter... I suppose when you're a kid or young, everything sticks to your brains better. You remember the details and all. But yes, this was, although... – I was in a bit of hurry to choose the memory or the photograph I wanted to pick. (Participant no. 1)

The participant ended up selecting a memory from her youth from a confirmation class. The story was typical to theatre, featuring funny turns of events, an exciting plot and a familiar subject. The audience could easily identify with the story and discover a shared understanding. Drama can be described as action and a process which can promote questioning; critical and constructive thinking, development of problem-solving faculties; skills related to comparing, assessment, evaluation and differentiation; as well as learning capabilities and an exploratory and investigative approach. (O'Neill & Lambert 1991, 15–16; Salmivaara 1994, 25)

The basis of drama is the human ability to imagine being something or someone they are not. With the help of such imagination, we can examine the way people act in different con-









ditions and situations. The sense of experience and living in character are central, and this identification process can take place both on stage and in the audience. In drama, the parties test their perspective against those of others in an interactive process. This happens as soon as two individuals assume certain dramatic roles and start to act in character. The roles represent different perspectives, and the dialogue and conflicts between them are what drive the drama onward. In drama, different, even potentially difficult, situations are experienced and possibly solved, at the same time participants learn to confront different intellectual, physical, social and emotional challenges. (Neelands 1992, 2-3, Salmivaara 1994, 24-25)

THE ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTORS IN THE DRAMATIC WORK BASED ON MEMORIES

Powerful emotions experienced in the past are stored deep in the mind and become experience-based knowledge regarding the relationship of the self and the surrounding world. Therefore, the individual's experiences, failures and disappointments included, are seen as resources in the *The stage of memories* process, which provide the participants and instructors with something to work with in the shared experience when processing personal stories or doing the exercises. The task of the instructor is to ensure that the exercises, improvisations, roles and performances retain a certain tension and the participants' interest. In addition to creating a safe and trusting atmosphere, the instructors have an important role in guiding the participants in finding a dramatic form for their thoughts and feelings on the paper theatre stage and transforming the sense of

story experienced by the group into an exploration of the present moment too. The most important tool for the instructor and the participants is the individual themselves: their personality with their emotions and memories, knowledge gathered from experience and their self-image and concept of knowledge. (Kujasalo 1994, 35)

8.4. Evaluation of the results of The stage of memories service model

The assessment of *The stage of memories* enactment has been carried out in smaller action-research-based cycles between each meeting session, taking the events in the previous session into consideration in planning the next session. After each meeting, the instructors discussed what should be considered in the next session. The assessment was carried out using data triangulation methods. In the first meeting, a questionnaire was used to map the background and starting situation of the participants. The instructors engaged in participatory observation during each meeting. In addition to this, the meetings were recorded on video and photographed to be accessed later. Throughout the process, the instructors communicated with the participants to find out how they felt about participation in this process. Finally after the last meeting, a group interview was held, in which everybody evaluated the process together and the participants were given final assessment questionnaires to be completed at home.

Based on the group interview and the final assessment questionnaire, all participants and instructors considered *The stage of memories* a successful experience. The way the participants threw themselves into play and gave their all, worked as a group, were open and enhanced the group spirit, were matters that came up in the interviews, the final assessment and the meeting sessions. All participants were motivated and enthusiastic about the work. They had actively committed and applied themselves to the tasks at hand.

All participants exceeded their personal boundaries and participated actively in all of the activities, from the dramatic exercises to making the scripts and props. Performing in front of an audience was particularly exciting and challenging for many. The way the participants immersed themselves into the work, focussed on it, tried and experimented was what was really significant.

That was what surprised me, I wouldn't otherwise do anything like this, or probably will never do... but this was really fantastic. (Participant no. 5)

For me it was the fact that I'm capable of something like this. Yes, I think that that in itself was a great achievement. (Participant no. 3)

Yes, that's true. And this was somehow different to what you had expected, even though you didn't really have any expectations. So that was new. (Participant no. 1)

Interesting, this was really interesting. I wouldn't have even thought of this. (Participant no. 4)

The efforts and results of others were also valued.

I did wonder, back at home... When the others had everything, they had made such nice things. Yes, I think that someone else's work always looks better. (Participant no. 5)

You have to be happy with that we all did our best. Nobody copied off the others. (Participant no. 3)

Commitment to the objectives, the thought process and the preparation for the next meetings and the performance continued at home between the meetings.

And then, you started to think about it at home beforehand. (Participant no. 2)

We did think about it a lot. I was like, I knew the lines well, even at night. So you did think about it often, really thought about it. Or I mean, what happened was, that of course you'd think about it and then you started to wonder how you could change the lines a bit and.. Yes, and I kind of read them out loud... (Participant no. 5)

The group prepared for the performance carefully and in earnest. For many, the performance was the most thrilling phase, in which they could overcome personal limitations. The excitement and the total concentration on the performance are evident for instance in the following question:

I couldn't hear the music. Was it on? (Participant no. 5)

Music was an integral part of this particular performance and it was, at times, quite loud. The others were surprised: in their experience,



this person appeared very collected and they had admired this calmness. For many, the performance entailed positive stress and mental pressure to do well:

Well, I'm always like that, if I have to perform, I'm like that. (Participant no. 2)

Seeing the performances felt great, and the group appreciated both their own and the others' accomplishments.

No, but I still don't know. I mean my performance was alright, I guess, but then you saw the others and you really knew how great they were. (Participant no. 5)

8.5. Keys developed in The stage of memories process

According to the material gathered from the group interview and the final assessment questionnaire as well as from the instructor's observations and the examination of the photographs, the following keys to promote brain and memory health were created in *The stage of memories* process: 1. Visual perception and visual thinking, 2. Reflective thinking, 3. Social interaction and sense of community, 4. Lifelong learning, 5. Exploratory learning, and 6. Creative thinking. In the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* project, the service models have been developed according to the action research approach: the experiences from the previous service models have been considered in the development of the next service models. However, each service model has also been assessed and examined separately in order to properly account for the special characteristics of each model. The descriptions of the keys built in *The stage of memories* project focus mainly on paper theatre and the special characteristics of working with drama. For a more specific description of visual perception and visual thinking, amongst other things, please see the applicable sections in the descriptions of the first and second service models.



Key 1.
VISUAL PERCEPTION AND VISUAL THINKING



Key 2.
REFLECTIVE THINKING

In The stage of memories process, visual thinking and perception took place in the perception and design of the stage, props, puppets and the entire performance. On the stage, memories were given a narrative form and the stories a visual shape. Reflective thinking took place in transforming the memory into a narrative form, a visual story with a plot, which various turns of events, lines and characters made into puppets brought forth. The photographs served to stir the memory and bring back visual recollections of the past. Memories were written into scripts, and after the writing process, the participants began recollecting and sketching the environment, in which the actual events in the memory had taken place. By painting and drawing, the props and sets were created as the operational environment for the story. Details were recollecting: the way the sun was shining and water glimmering, and how a tall rock saved the participants from a terrible attack by wild bull calves. A backdrop was created for the set, and a sense of three-dimensionality was added by bringing furniture, rocks, stones, bushes, crowds and wavy waters in front or in the middle of the stage. Everyone shaped and processed their memory into a living visual narrative in which the puppets brought the memories out to be seen. Visual perception was essential in processing the puppets. Black and white photographs were enlarged, and the participants highlighted important sections with colours. At the same time, they remembered the clothes they wore at the time, the colours of the dress, how the fabric felt against their skin. When making the puppets, the participants had to consider the proportions of the human figures and their environment.

In the theatre, a memory is given a physical, concrete form. On the stage, life lived is re-lived and the way things and acts were experienced are experienced again. For this reason, the meaningful moments chosen by the participants are displayed on *The stage of memories* stage in a living, interesting format, and the hidden experiences are dressed in the colourful and multidimensional form of paper theatre. (Hohenthal-Antin 2013, 76) The participants recollecting meaningful moments and more and more details about a specific memory: for example, about a girl who was brave enough to defy the priest and the etiquette of the time by wearing lipstick, looking like Brigitte Bardot; how one of the participants travelled a long way to confirmation camp by bike and where the bike was left during the lesson, and how there was dancing right after the lesson. In the art activities, attention was paid to the dialogue between the present and the past in the memories as well as the examination of what could be seen in the photographs. The instructors guided the group in making these memories visible with the means of visual arts and paper theatre. The creative process of working and the recollection process are essential: the commitment to the process creates the aesthetic quality of the action and the visible world. (Cf. Hohenthal-Antin 2013, 67)



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Key 3.

SOCIAL INTERACTION AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- Construction of shared knowledge
- Moulding identity
- Developing self-knowledge

Social interaction and sense of community became the next key in *The stage of memories* project. In learning from art, personal knowledge is combined with social knowledge, which creates a unique and personal experiential knowledge of the here and now (Kujasalo 1994, 43–44). In *The stage of memories* process, this deeper understanding of making art came up in the group interviews as an increased appreciation of, and interest in, art. The participants transformed, along the lines of sociocultural thinking, into empowered active actors within art and culture and participants in art events. Inspired by their experiences in the group, the participants became interested in art and started to independently seek new cultural experiences. According to the participants' accounts, they had felt more awake, their stage fright had decreased, they had gained more self-confidence and with that, courage to try and do new things. In addition to this, they reported having gained courage to be who they are, they accepted each other more and learned to better understand differences in people.

According to Toivanen (2009), personal learning and changes in self-knowledge and attitudes takes place in the dramatic process. The development of skills and preparedness for self-expression has positive effects on self-esteem and self-knowledge. According to the doctoral dissertations examined by Toivanen (2009), working with drama and the theatre develops perseverance, concentration, self-esteem and self-knowledge an individual, and strengthens the group. In addition to this, it increases social interaction and understanding of others, acceptance of others, reciprocity and empathy. The dissertations examined the experiences of children and young people, but the results reflect the significance of working with drama in general. According to Toivonen, what is significant in drama is the bringing out of hidden potential.

With the help of shared life stories, personal photographs and the related narratives, the participants and instructors were able to get to know each other better, and everyone had the chance to tell the others about themselves and to stand out as a unique personality whose life has meaning. Social interaction and construction of shared knowledge took place in the reminiscing and sharing processes. An important aspect of reminiscing is its social dimension: it connects those of the same generation in particular, with similar experiences and memories of a shared time period (Karisto & Pekkarinen 2013). The stories stirred some thoughts and questions and brought up shared experiences with which the others could identify and through which to mirror one's own experiences.



In *The stage of memories* process, the participants crossed the threshold of conventional ways of acting and stepped into the world of theatre. The genuineness, openness and ability of the participants to surrender to the shared endeavour was significant for the working process. An atmosphere of trust emerged, in which the participants could safely share even difficult issues. Reliving memories provided an opportunity to learn something new, but also to create new memories. This way, the personal memories of the participants became – in the process of social interaction – shared memories, which all could identify with. In the group, the experiences and the act of creating something were also significant at an individual level. When sharing life stories, the fact that someone else cares about your life and wants to hear your story, is significant. Being heard, and being able to hear about others' lives, are both important components in the identity work of the individual. In the sharing and performing of memories in the group within *The stage of memories* project, each participant was given the opportunity to be visible and present as an active agent (please see Hohenthal-Antin 2009). This is a so-called narrative identity which is not only constructed in stories told about oneself, but also in the identification in others' stories. A life story is touching because it activates the listener's personal experiences. In a sense, the other also tells the story of the listener by telling his own. (Sava 2004, 53–55)

COMMITMENT TO THE SERIOUS PLAY OF PARTICIPANTS

The contract of play is fulfilled in *The stage of memories* process much in the same way as in the theatre and cinema, when we immerse ourselves in fiction. In *The stage of memories* group, surrendering and commitment to play took place, which retained playfulness in the group and made achieving the objectives possible. (Heikkinen 2002)



Key 4.
LIFELONG LEARNING



Key 5.
EXPLORATORY LEARNING

The most significant keys in The stage of memories project were the possibility for lifelong and exploratory learning. The possibility for change, growth and learning life management skills is constantly present in drama education. Continuous incompleteness and change as well as the process-like nature of the project are also present. Working with drama can be seen holistically, and its objective is to develop the intellectual, social, physical, emotional and moral faculties of the participants. (Heikkinen 2002, 125; O'Neill 1995) In drama work, finding one's personal experience-based knowledge and learning how to use it as a source and resource, is essential (Kujasalo 1994, 39; Neelands 1984, 39; cf. Dewey 1934/1980).

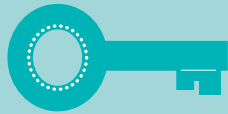


The important aspect in drama education, in addition to the way its effects extend to telling stories, making theatre and experiencing, is the way it also affects our growth, the way we perceive ourselves and our identity in the world. At best, the experience of the drama process can be a transformative and pedagogic process, breaking boundaries and opening new perspectives. The effect can be sensed both in the audience as well as in the actual drama process. (Heikkinen 2002, 72) The pedagogic-aesthetic growth process enables the practice of various skills and examining and constructing various meanings. (Heikkinen 2002, 121; Bolton 1986, 218–219)

In working with drama, the participants learn once they commit to the content and theme of the drama and begin to examine it with an exploratory approach (O'Neill & Lambert 1991, 15–16; Heikkinen 2002). In *The stage of memories* project, the participants' commitment, enthusiasm and focus on the work was evident in each meeting as well as in the intermediate homework assignments. Everyone was deeply engaged in processing their memory and did their very best. As an example, one of the participants concentrated on finding just right music for the play for several hours.

And then I got really excited, when I had to do that, had to find the right music, and I looked and looked, it must have been several hours, I... (- -) several hours; this is no good, but this is, no, this one. And then I started to feel that I didn't know what to choose anymore. But I realised that there is so much good music. (Participant no. 3)

The music choices were very successful and supported the content and mood of the plays beautifully. The enormous choice of music available online made the selection difficult, as the participants strived towards perfection. At the same time, while engaged in this assignment, the participant noticed how much good music there is online and, excited, decided to go online again to look for music. A special feature of *The stage of memories* project was the way the different arts could be integrated into the work. This cross-sectional integration of the different arts in *The stage of memories* project took place by combining drama, visual arts, music and writing in the process.



Key 6.

CREATIVE THINKING

- The flow experience
- Ability to make decisions

The stage of memories project required creative thinking and creative decision-making from the participants, in all phases of the work. In *The stage of memories* working process, the participants had to make decisions constantly, starting from the selection of the memory and the photograph. When writing the script, creative thinking is significant in terms putting one's memory into words, into a narrative format. Creativity refers to discovering and making new, surprising solutions, in addition to artistic creativity. In the creative recollection process, creative and art-based operation forms are used systematically to stir memories, which allows for life experiences to be made visible through the work, with the means of

theatre and other art activities (Hohenthal-Antin 2009, 23). According to Hohenthal-Antin, art is a tool with which we process ourselves through our memories, thereby gaining the legitimacy to become visible.

In the exercises, the quick reactions needed to adjust to new situations required total concentration and decision-making abilities from the participants. In the drama exercises, the participants experimented with rapid shifts of emotional states and jumping into new roles. Rapid changing of roles was also important in the rehearsals and performances of the plays. Everyone was allowed to try different roles and to act as presenters in the performances. With play, child-like intuition, creativity, trying and inhibitions were released, allowing the internalised parent to withdraw (please see Laitinen 1994). In this work, the instructor's conscious target-oriented approach, art pedagogics and the ability to create a safe environment in the situation played crucial roles.

In the work done in The stage of memories project, the significance of creativity as a key to promote brain and memory health was central. In this context, creativity refers to letting go of conventional or habitual ways of acting (please see Dewey 1997) and discovering new ways of thinking. For Csikszentmihalyi (1996), creativity gives our life meaning. Our most interesting, important and human achievements are based on our ability for creative thinking. Our linguistic abilities, values, artistic expression, scientific thinking and technology are all significant aspects behind creativity. Through learning, the skills and knowledge are transferred to others. According to Csikszentmihalyi, creative activity makes us feel like we are fully living our lives, being a part of something larger than ourselves. (Csikszentmihalyi 1996, 1–2)

Creativity requires space, time and place, which *The stage of memories* project provided for the participants. In addition to this, creativity requires the mind to be open to new things:

When I go someplace, I'm usually like that that I don't want to, that I have these expectations about what it will be like, this and that, because I've noticed that once you get there... And once you have thought about what it will be like, then, it will be something completely different. So, now I'll go everywhere with an open mind, when I normally went about it a bit differently, wanted to wait and see. (Participant no. 3)

In The stage of memories project, creative thinking and using your decision-making abilities are constantly present. Selecting the photographs and processing memories into a narrative script, sets and puppets require constant decision making, creative thinking, the ability to tolerate incompleteness, visual thinking and perception and applying a new perspective to one's personal memory. Based on our observations, the creative process that took place in the project seemed to create an occasional, if not constant, flow experience for the participants (Csikszentmihalyi 1996, 2007). The participants learned something new, empowered in the working process and strived to discover new solutions. The work was demanding and required a lot of brain work from the participants. Finding solutions gave the participants experiences of success.

In The stage of memories project, exceeding oneself and becoming enthusiastic about making art defined the experiences of the participants. Time seemed to run out, as the participants concentrated and immersed themselves in the work.

They were surprised by their abilities and creations, for which they received positive feedback both from the group and the instructors. According to Csikszentmihalyi (2007, 87), we can achieve a flow stage when we feel that we are above our personal challenge and skill level. The opposite of flow is apathy, in which both the challenge and the skills are minimal. Other experiences from the meeting of skills and challenges are worrying, anxiety, becoming more energetic, sense of control, relaxation and boredom, all experiences we constantly go through both in our daily life and when meeting new challenges. (Csikszentmihalyi 2007, 87–91)

Yes, and I noticed that once you are there, you do tend to get excited, or you know, or I can't explain it, but that's what happens. When you go someplace and get something else than just being at home, you just get bored and stay at home and so on, I mean we should get people to go out more... (Participant no. 3)

And I'm glad I left and could come to all these meetings. (Participant no. 4)

The most significant element in the participants' accounts about their experiences was leaving the house and accepting new challenges, which allowed them to gain new experiences and learn something new. The participants in *The stage of memories* project experienced something new, were attentive and focussed on their work, got excited about their new experiences and were happy with their new skills. They had experiences of success in applying what they had learned in the art activities of the previous service models in this project. Their approach to art had changed and become exploratory: how could I apply what I have learned here in my own life? In accordance with the dynamics of flow, one's own actions and acquiring new skills develop step by step with the continuous challenging of the self (Csikszentmihalyi 2007, 81). On The stage of memories, each participant challenged themselves and exceeded at least the state of apathy described by Csikszentmihalyi (2007, 87–91), in which people feel that the challenges ahead and skills are limited, and may experience depression and sadness. If the task at hand is too difficult, i.e. the challenges exceed our skills, an individual may experience worry, sadness, stress and anxiety, at the same time as vigilance, energy and improved concentration. If the skills surpass the challenge, the individual is bored, which may lead to experiences of depression, but also of satisfaction and relaxation. The individual is satisfied and confident when they feel in control of the act; here, the experience is defined by confidence in one's skills and the experience of happiness. The flow experience can happen when you exceed your challenge and skills level, and experience happiness and concentration. (Csikszentmihalyi 2007, 87) For the purpose of brain activation, it is important that the individual meets different new challenges, both big and small, and challenges themselves to change their habitual course of action, to observe, see and experience something new. In The stage of memories project, this trying out of new perspectives and modes of action and challenging oneself to learn something new were realised in the diverse art activities, both on stage and in the social interaction with the others.





GENIUS BODY

9. Genius Body (KehoNero)

Jonna Aaltonen

In the Genius Body project, brain and memory functions are activated with creative movement and self-expression: the project participants move, dance, see, listen and are met and gently encouraged to break their boundaries and to do things differently.

In the next section, dance artist Jonna Aaltonen outlines the theoretical background and the framework of implementation of the *Genius Body* project, as well as the actual implementation and the assessment of the activities, from the role and perspective of a dance artist and the instructor and developer of the service model. The *Genius Body* project was carried out in October and November 2013. The group met six times in the facilities of Turun Lähimmäispalveluyhdistys ry Kotikunnas. There were nine active participants in the group. We received several queries about *Genius Body* both during and after its operation. In the *Genius Body* project, the Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland implemented a master and apprentice-type mentoring model, which the association had developed. In the mentoring programme, dance artists Saara Annala and Jennifer Joffs attended the group meetings of *KehoNero* to learn the exercises in the project with Jonna's guidance. The assessment of *Genius Body* was carried out by Saara Hyyrynen, of physiotherapy student specialising in psycho-physical physiotherapy, and Niina Katajapuu, lecturer in physiotherapy. The bodily changes during the *Genius Body* project were assessed with an application of the BAS (Body Awareness Scale) system.

Several studies have indicated that culture, art and sociocultural activity have a positive effect on memory and brain functions (Särkämö et al. 2008; Hannemann 2006; Holthe et al. 2007; Wilson et al. 2007; Small et al. 2007; Götell et al. 2008; Ravelin 2008). Social interaction, encounters, touching, interaction and a sense of community, inspiring activities, exercise, learning something new, breaking routines and changing habitual thought and action patterns, even just a little, activate the brain in many ways and therefore promote brain health and memory functions. All of these elements are essential in the approach I have used as a basis upon which to develop the different exercises used in the *Genius Body* workshops.

We are physical, psychological, social and cultural actors. The instructor must succeed in creating a safe, warm and encouraging atmosphere from the start. This creates genuine trust between the instructor and the group, which is fertile soil for humour, creativity and creative abandon. The atmosphere of trust and the holistic approach were also the foundation of the *Genius Body* workshops, with which I have combined exercises in social interaction for both the body and the mind. This combination of exercises makes *Genius Body* unique, and differentiates it from regular gymnastics exercises. Each of the ex-

ercises I have chosen has an objective. Furthermore, all exercises carried out in the workshop link together in a pedagogically logical and functional ensemble.

Based on the development work in the *Genius Body* workshop and the analysis based on this work, the exercises for creative expression, whether they employ movement, social contacts or linguistic assignments, maintain and develop cognitive skills. For instance, exercises in which limits of space, or personal and other people's boundaries are observed, reinforce the ability of visual perception, which has a significant role in our daily lives. Creative movement activates creative thinking. Improvisatory tasks develop the elasticity of decision-making. In addition to this, breaking routines and doing things differently increase the elasticity of our actions. Arvo Ylppö, the renowned Finnish professor of paediatrics, archiater and the father of the Finnish public child welfare system noted in his 95-year anniversary interview that the neural network of the brain is in a constant dynamic state of change, ready to adapt to changes (Juntunen 2014). This phenomena is known as the plasticity of the brain. Continuous learning is possible, when the brain retains its plasticity and phenomenon in which the synapses, the connections between the networks, are reinforced functions. In other words, when actions are flexible and varied, brain plasticity increases and may create new brain network connections.

The approach of lifelong learning, according to which we learn throughout our lives, was applied in the *Genius Body* workshop. I strived to keep the feel of the workshop continuously open and, as the instructor, to be present in the moment, to be there for the group. I wanted to follow my plan flexibly, communicating with the group and listening to, sensing and observing





their reactions and sensibilities. This way, I wanted to be able to change my plan in any way the situation would require. As the *Genius Body* enactment workshop proceeded, I noticed that I had achieved the goal I had set, essential for interaction and learning: the group had gained an internal motivation to act together, to try many kinds of new things and really throw themselves into the exercises. A positive, shared sense of purpose emerged between us, making instructing the group easy and rewarding. Unknown exercises and the ability to let go and surrender to them are rewarding in themselves and create an internal experience of unification. Self-esteem and self-knowledge increase, as does courage to encounter something new. And, as courage grows, we dare to enter new, even challenging social situations. This creates a positive, upward cycle.

9.1. Examples of the methods and objectives of Genius Body

OBJECTIVE 1:

Increasing creative thinking, the elasticity of decision-making, the ability to recognise the boundaries of others and the self and to perceive space

METHOD:

the 'Rooms of movement' exercise

I divide the space into four, for example with masking tape. We discuss together and find different tempos, dynamics, and qualities of movement (such as fast, slow, sharp, round). We are only allowed to use one of these ways of movement in each quarter of the room. We can move freely in the space, from one 'room' to another. Every time we change 'rooms', we also change the way we move.

Then we add to the movement a sound that describes it. Still we keep moving freely together in the 'rooms', now combining sound and movement. As the situation progresses, we might also add communication with the others into the mix. This way, we can construct conversations of movement and sound. We also do the same exercise in two groups: one groups moves in the 'rooms', while the other watches and observes. The groups take turns in moving and observing. After the exercise, we discuss our observations. The exercise is based on activating the so-called mirror neurons when watching others move. Mirror neurons are neurons which are activated both when an action is being performed as well as when the individual observes someone else performing the action. Both watching movement and dance as well as moving in itself mould the brain (Cross et al. 2009). Brain activation is more pronounced when we watch moves and movement which our body recognises and has practiced before (Calvo-Merino et al. 2005).

OBJECTIVE 2:

Increasing the body-mind connection, realising the significance and power of touching, reinforcing self-esteem and courage, making one's personality visible, and finding new channels of communication.





METHODS:

the 'Memory of a touch' exercise

We all think of a pleasant memory of a touch either from our childhood or from the present moment. We divide into pairs. Then we demonstrate and share our memory with our pair. We switch pairs, until everyone has had the chance to show their memory to each member of the group. Finally we discuss the thoughts and emotions stirred by the exercise together.

The 'Memory of a touch' exercise is based on previous experiences of the effects of dance and creative movement among the elderly. The importance of touch is particularly pronounced in communication with people suffering from severe memory disorders: our emotional memory remains, even if other cognitive abilities are impaired. The locks of the mind can be surpassed with the means of art.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Improving visual perception abilities, acknowledging your boundaries, recognising your kinesphere and social distance, reinforcing self-esteem and self-knowledge.

METHODS:

the 'Eye contact' exercises

We walk freely in the space. We observe the space and the others moving in it. We look at the people passing by differently: we take a long look, we take a long look at a particular body part, we cast a sideways glance, etc. Finally, we stop and look them in the eye. We look long and hard. We change pairs several times. We try to keep our facial expressions neutral throughout the exercise. Finally we discuss the thoughts and emotions stirred by the exercise together.

In addition to the shared group exercises, brain plasticity can be strengthened in everyday life. I developed homework exercises in the *Genius Body* workshop to reinforce the effects of the other exercises. For example, in the 'Do something not typical to you' homework exercise, the task is to do something the participant typically would not do (such as walk backwards in the city centre for 100 metres). In the next meeting, we discuss what each of the participants has done, how it had felt, what kinds of reactions doing something differently had caused in the environment and self, and what kinds of emotions and thoughts doing something differently stirred.





9.2. Experiences from the enactment project

In the feedback from the enactment workshop, the participants described having received new ideas; feeling invigorated; gaining new energy, enthusiasm, curiosity and courage to tackle new challenges; and receiving medication and a good ‘dusting’ of the brain. Many experienced improved balance and presence. “I’ve started to breathe!” was for me one of the most memorable comments in the feedback.

Working with the enactment group resulted in the following:

1. increased team spirit with the help of trusting and safe interaction
2. development of social flexibility
3. increase of motivation and commitment once the group dynamics had formed
4. increase in creative thinking as the exercises proceeded
5. improvement of bodily creativity and imagination as personal movement vocabulary increased
6. increase in abilities to adapt and to tolerate change when engaging in new, previously unknown assignments
7. increase in courage and the ability to surrender oneself when getting involved in the improvisation exercises
8. increased sensory sensitivity, for instance, increased touching and feelings of caring within the group.

For me as an artist, the *Genius Body* workshops have been particularly encouraging and inspiring. In my previous *PolvennostoSeikkailu* workshop concept, and particularly based on this development experience, I have become all the more convinced that these kinds of workshop activities work and are necessary and efficient in maintaining brain health. *Genius Body* can help to achieve significant economic benefit by delaying the emergence and progress of memory disorders. The aging generation can keep active and live and act independently for longer.



9.3. Keys developed in the Genius Body service model

Helena Malmivirta

In the *Genius Body* project, the experiences recounted by the group transform into the following keys:



Key 1. INCREASED BODY CONSCIOUSNESS

According to the accounts of the *Genius Body* participants, the exercises were experienced as, even for short intervals, having affected the increase of body consciousness, better balance, finding new movements, and holistic body use. Moving and dancing are not merely sources of joy and refreshment, or merely elements of health and physical well-being. According to Eeva Anttila (2009), movement and the body enable an understanding of the relationship between the self and the world, which in turn organises and strengthens the experience of the self and allows the individual to open up to different possibilities. When moving in a space, in a group, the individual gets to confront themselves, the other people and the surrounding space in a multidimensional way, as abstract and concrete at the same time. The sense of one's body is reinforced and one gets in touch with oneself. In dance-like expression, reaching your own personal experience of movement is important. Producing personal movements in creative and expressive dance is significant: in this process, we must notice and consider the possibilities of movement and the limits of our bodies. The group did note that they had noticed changes in their bodies between the beginning and end of the *Genius Body* project. (Anttila 2009, 87–88) The student also noticed, in active authentic observation, a change in the movements of two participants already in this relatively short series of exercises designed to activate movement.

You can tell that you've done something when you get home at night. (Participant no. 2)

Movements on both sides, both brain hemispheres must have got their exercise. (Participant no. 14)

It was holistic. You had to really think what to do: arms, legs and head. (Participant no. 3)





Key 2.
CREATIVE THINKING

- Increase in abilities to adapt and to tolerate change when engaging in new, previously unknown assignments
- Increase in courage and readiness to surrender to the improvisation exercises

The instructed interventions in the *Genius Body* project are based on the framework of art pedagogics, allowing the examination of target-oriented dance and movement expression from the framework of art education. Karen Kohn Bradley (2002) notes in her article that instructing dance and movement based on target-oriented art education seems to be connected to the development of creative and critical thinking. The fluency and flow of thought are developed with the help of the physical action integral with dance. A kind of flow of thinking can be achieved with a flowing movement. The exercises carried out in each *Genius Body* session were created to enable the continuation of movement. Bradley (2002) also talks of turning ideas upside down, and examining them upside down. In the *Genius Body* exercises, things were concretely turned upside down by, for instance, walking backwards, in the knot exercises, and movement at the different levels of fast and slow. The purpose of these exercises was to enhance a different way of thinking and moving and to reinforce the connection between the body and the mind.

When you go out for a walk, you choose a different route, for variation, in a different way, your approach to people changes. (Participant no. 3)

I've started to breathe. (Participant no. 5)

I've learned how to be present. (Participant no. 16)

The harder it has been, the nicer the memory; you've been able to exceed yourself. (Participant no. 15)

Crossing my personal boundaries, having the courage to participate in everything, despite my ailments. (Participant no. 5)





Key 3.
SOCIAL INTERACTION

- Increase in team spirit with the help of safe and reliable interaction
- Development of social flexibility
- Increase in motivation and commitment along with the formation of group cohesion

The dance and creative expression through movement in the *Genius Body* project contained plenty of social interaction. Expression, communication and mediating meaning were significant aspects of the *Genius Body* project. It had been consciously planned that they would be included in each meeting session. The atmosphere felt safe from the first meeting, and the participants said that joining the group and being a part of it had been easy. The participants encouraged each other and respected each other's ways of moving and self-expression. We walked in a circle, which ensured that everyone had to take the others into consideration by giving them space, creating figures of movement together, and enabling a listening way of working by taking turns, with the help of creative movement.

I was in awe of how quickly the group became a group, and trust was created. (Participant no. 14)

The actions of the group radiate positivity. (Participant no. 17)

Feeling positive, having met new people in Genius Body. (Participant no. 15)

Everyone was genuinely involved, thanks to the great team spirit. Everyone really gave their all. A positive, active attitude. (Participant no. 4)

The observations of physiotherapy student Saara Hyyryläinen (2013) about the actions of the *Genius Body* participants are similar. Saara noticed that all participants oriented themselves to the assignment very well and had the courage to try different kinds of exercises. As the group got more and more cohesive, the close collaboration and openness among the group increased. Everybody supported everybody. There was room for everyone, and everyone mattered. The sense of being part of the group was reinforced, and the group became very close. When performing the assignments, the participants focussed and directed their energy towards the work. They knew without saying what would happen next (the beginning and end exercises). The group members supported each other in the performance of the task, and the roles became more flexible. All participants concentrated fully on the situation at hand.



Key 4.
MENTAL ACTIVITY

- Improved sensory sensitivity
- Mental images of movements



Dance that takes place in social interaction activates the emotional centre of the brain, and the compelling music used in the exercises, combined with movement, creates emotional experiences, mental activity. Hannaford (2003; Malmivirta 2013) has described the role of the body and movement in the development of intelligence, emotions and skills. Movement stirs and activates our mental abilities. We move our heads to sense our environment with our eyes, ears and nose. When we move, we perceive the world and the space in it three-dimensionally, and the eye focuses on the details. With our hand movements, we touch, handle and perceive the world. With the movements of our legs and our entire body, we move from one place to another, and change our body posture, even without noticing. The motor memory of the body guides us into different spaces and places. These transitions create mental images, and movement connects and anchors the knowledge and experiences in the neural networks of the brain. (Hannaford 2003; Malmivirta 2013)

The previously mentioned ways of moving took place in each target-oriented session of the Genius Body project. In Genius Body, dance was movement and rhythm, a series of steps and holistic movement of the body and mind, combining thought and movement. When increasing mental activity is set as the objective of dance, it should include participatory activation in particular, in which decisions are made quickly. This way, dancing is simultaneously integrated with several brain functions. Merleau-Ponty (1962) describes this event as the body receiving colours and sounds, which, as an experience, is difficult to pinpoint to the sphere of just one sense: therefore, the experience will spontaneously spread over into the domain of the other senses as well.

In dance and creative movement, all senses are cross-activated. According to research, the quick decisions made while dancing are a key to intelligence. Regular dancing builds our cognitive storage. (Powers 2010) However, in order to activate the brain, dancing must be challenging.

Special movements, slow, fast, really fast. This gave me the tools to do the same exercises at home. (Participant no. 1)

You noticed that things can be done differently. To dare to do more. It made my day, made me feel energetic. (Participant no. 4)

An example of this is the square exercise in *Genius Body* described by Jonna, in which all movement took place in four rooms, each reserved for a different kind of movement. Student Saara Hyyrynen had created, with her teacher Nina Katajapuu, a background framework, from which a bridge was found to the assessment in the *Genius Body* project at the very beginning of the assessment phase. The student's assessment framework was based on the psychophysical concept of man, which in turn is based on the approach of psychophysical physiotherapy. In this approach, the body and the mind form one holistic entity and are therefore in constant mutual interaction. The individual acts, at all times, in a certain relation to the environment, in a certain space, time and situation, making the individual's awareness of their actions a significant element of all of their acts and



activities. Bodily sensations affect our mind, and on the other hand, emotions and thoughts are reflected in our movements and experience of our bodies.

Lots of arms and legs in a pile, feeling warm and safe. (Participant no. 1)

Such diverse exercises in small circles. How is it possible to discover so many movements, just stay in one place and sweat?(Participant no. 15)

Saara Hyyrynen applied selected parts of the Body Awareness Scale, developed by Roxendal (1985), in the observation process. For the observer, the assessment of body awareness provides information about the body awareness and body management of the observed subject, both as expressed by the subject (via a questionnaire) and from an external observer's point of view. In *Genius Body*, the following aspects were observed: walking, sitting down and being seated, laying down and lying, shifting body weight from one foot to the other, standing on one foot, the body's relation to the centre line of the body, separate body movements and eye contact. Based on the observations, the student came to the conclusion that during the six weeks of activities and the activating intermediate homework assignments in the *Genius Body* project, changes in comparison with the starting situation could be observed in the movement of the participants as a whole as well as in the individual movements observed.

Yes, I've started to go strolling more often. (Participant no. 6)

I've walked a lot, here and elsewhere, whereas before I would just have jumped on a bus.(Participant no. 2)

Readiness to accept new challenges. (Participant no. 3)









10. Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health

Helena Malmivirta

SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

A total of 17 people took part in the participatory art activities of the four service models in the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project. Five of these people participated in the participatory art activities of all three of the service models executed in Turku. Nine people took part in the *Genius Body* project and also in the art activities implemented in Salon Taidemuseo Veturitalli.

The accounts of all participants were heard either in individual or group interviews, their diary entries and written feedback have been read, and the authentic observations of the instructors as well as video recordings from the group activities have been considered. The accounts of the participants indicate that the participatory art activities have been meaningful and have brought rhythm into the participants' lives. According to the participants, participation in the art activities activated their memory, allowed them to learn something new and examine things from different perspectives. Furthermore, the participants described having learned something new about art and having a new kind of approach to art. Since the project, the project participants have participated in various art events more actively and reported examining art more carefully.

In addition to this, the participants report experiencing art having a positive effect on their vitality and having brought positive changes in their mental alertness. The different forms and methods of art in the art activities were experienced as interesting, even surprising. The art activities activated the participants to return to the past in their memories, and then back to the present moment, challenged them to think differently and in general, consider many things much more closely. The sharing and telling of stories in the group has also enriched the participants' thought processes. Participatory art activities unearthed long forgotten things, buried deep in the memory, allowing them to be shared with others a part of history common to all participants in the group. Being part of the group and a community were experienced as particularly meaningful, and according to the group's accounts, working together has led to an improved sense of vitality. Learning something new and sharing experiences was experienced as easier when done in a group setting. The support and appreciation of others were also meaningful elements. The participants reported recognising the target-oriented dimension in the art activities, although they didn't always have a clear idea of what would happen next. Uncertainty increased their interest. The participants did not think of the art activities as twiddling or dabbling, rather, they were experienced as significant, target-oriented action. Furthermore, the activities were experienced as an important and meaningful way to organise one's life experiences. In ad-

dition to this, the art activities have allowed difficult issues to be processed and brought a new kind of understanding to, for instance, war-time experiences, events and the distanced presence between one's parents.

In 2013, five participants took part in three service models applying participatory art activities. One of the participants describes their experiences as follows:

You really had to put yourself out there in the projects. And bring the memories from your life with you. The most challenging, difficult thing was to capture the memories on paper as colours, but it was interesting to be introduced to visual arts (the What do I want to remember from my life? project); the most active, emotional, inspiring, using different body movements and sounds in the exercises (the Genius Body project). A memory of life with verbal means, the related music and paper puppets, an interesting way to materialise a memory The stage of memories project. (Participant no. 3)

In addition to this, the participants had experienced art as multi-sensory and art having had an effect on the vitality and alertness of their bodies:

But I believe in it too. There is this special tingling sensation, if it is interesting (such as a theatre performance). (Participant no. 1)

Yes, and then you start to go over what you've seen and heard. Because your sight and hearing are constantly a part of it. (Participant no. 2)

And the sense of touch, too. (Participant no. 4)

Yes, and sometimes you notice that your cheeks get all red, and you start to feel hot... (Participant no. 1)

10.1. Keys to good brain health

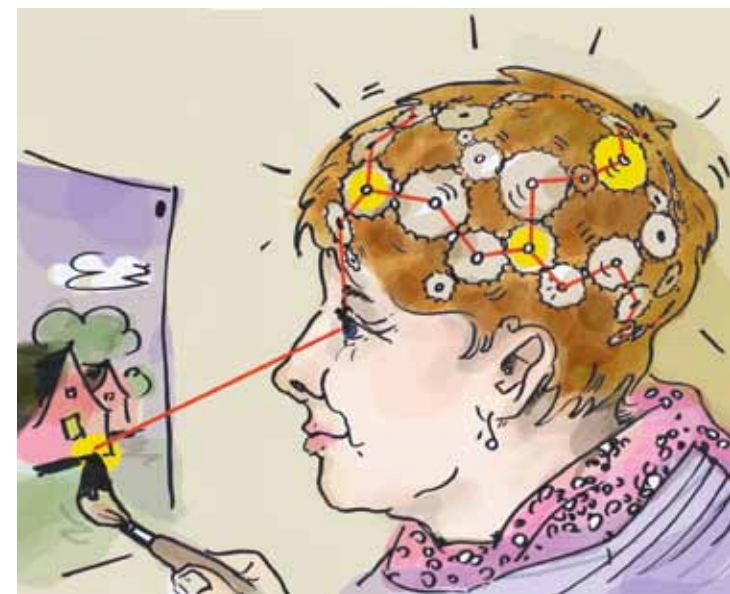
The way people in the third age have taken an interest in their health has, for its part, affected the popularity of brain research. As Nussbaum (2011) notes in his article '*Brain Health: Bridging Neuroscience to Consumer Application*', this new field of research, which is closely anchored in its practical application, has become one of the most important topics of our time in the health and well-being forum. Talking about brain health in various contexts had highlighted the need to define brain health reliably with various scientific terms.

The Alzheimer Society of Finland (Muistiliitto 2013) defines brain health as brain well-being supported by a healthy lifestyle, such as healthy nutrition, exercise, abstinence from intoxicants and challenging the brain at a suitable level. Sufficient rest

and avoidance of stress are also components of good brain health. Environmental factors affect our brain functions continuously, and the adaptation of the brain is a lifelong process. According to the Alzheimer Society of Finland, intellectual challenges and an active social life also create new neuron network connections and thereby affect the memory positively. A well-networked brain is also more resistant to changes caused by memory disorders. The brain loves culture, puzzles, music, studying, reading and all kinds of non-routine activities – anything which activates the different neurons of the brain. The significant element in promoting brain health is that the activities bring joy and refresh the mind. (Muistiliitto, 2013)

Another significant aspect seems to be that the possibilities in the brain are activated by our own action. By engaging in activities we like and developing and learning new skills, along with a healthy diet and exercise, we mould the brain and keep it in shape. According to Müller (2003), the movements and steps in dancing, for instance, when combined with music, activate different neural networks which together form a functional entity, thus reinforcing the connection between the networks. When learning and thinking about the steps, we maintain our ability to learn and at the same time, hone our logic and analytical skills. In addition to this, when dancing in a group or in a pair, dancing contains an element of social interaction. This activates the centres of emotion in our brain and at the same time, the combination of music and movement creates emotional experiences which, in turn, promote the well-being of the brain.

Nussbaum (2011, 6–12) defines brain health as a result of a dynamic process in which an individual commits himself to a behaviour and behavioural environment that enhances better brain health. The focus is on finding and identifying the behavioural models and operating environments which do promote brain health. Nussbaum differentiates *brain fitness* and similar concepts, which do not entail intellectual effort, from brain health. In addition to intellectual effort and reinforcing cognitive skills, nutrition and emotional, psychological, social and physical activity affect brain health. Nussbaum's (Diamond & Hopson 1998; Nussbaum 2010; Nussbaum 2011, 6–12) multifaceted brain health lifestyle contains social, physical and psychological activity as well as mental stimulation, which are all significant environmental or environment-based factors in promoting brain activation.



According to Michelon (2006), cognitive skills are skills with which we solve both simple and complex tasks in our lives. Cognitive capability affects our learning, remembering, problem-solving and perception. According to this view, activities that contain cognitive, intellectual challenges are defined as promoting brain activity and therefore, brain health. Not only the participatory art activities based on target-oriented art pedagogics but also the instruction and construction of art activities – based on sociocultural learning practices – executed in the participatory *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* service model activities have succeeded in promoting cognitive capabilities. The different layers of memory were in active motion, as the photographs and life stories were transformed into visual narratives, portfolios and the stage, with the means

of arts and theatre. In addition to this, the story-telling process inspired linguistic talent. Visual thinking as well as visual and mental processing took place in watching the photographs and art and combining and processing the photographs with the stories in the personal history of the participants, with the means of visual arts and the paper theatre. Similarly, visual perception and imaging in following one's own and the others' movements took place in the *Genius Body* project. In *Genius Body*, the body was activated with diverse movements, each of which contained elements of problem-solving and decision-making. The art activities of all of the service models provided the opportunity to learn something new of the cultural environment of the participants' childhood and their daily cultural habits and history.

Social interaction is a significant factor in promoting brain health. Indeed, the significance of social interaction was emphasised in the group activities of all four service models. A sense of belonging to the community, a sense of participation, sharing stories and experiences and, as a result of sharing, the deepening of one's own understanding and experience were regarded as important outcomes of the project.

The participants learned something new in the ways of seeing, encountering and making art. For many, the forms, means and methods of the participatory art activities were brand new, and when learning them, the participants developed their skills into an art. According to Nussbaum (2011, 6–12; Kramer & al. 2004), brain health is a lifelong, proactive process in which the brain is moulded by the stimuli in the environment. The brain feels well when the environment promotes activation and involves social interaction. From the point of view of promoting brain health, it is important that the brain is occupied with new and complex tasks throughout our lives: this way, the unused reserve of our brain may also promote brain health and delay the emergence of memory disorders. In the research and development work of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* service models, each participant discovered new skills and talents to cultivate with the means of art and culture. The unused reserve of the brain was put to use.

The following keys for promoting brain health were developed in the four service models of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development project: Creative thinking, visual perception and visual thinking, reflective thinking, tacit knowledge, mental activity, lifelong learning and social interaction.

In this summary, I have brought together definitions of brain health and the keys created in the research and development work of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* service models, constructed within a multidisciplinary framework. In this review, the previously described keys, built with the means of art and culture, seem to enhance a lifestyle that promotes brain health.

According to Paul Howard-Jones (2007, 30), the increasing knowledge we have of our brain produces expectations for new knowledge in the fields of teaching and lifelong learning. At the same time, neuroscientists are increasingly interested in how the brain functions in complex environments that simulate real life. Indeed, according to Howard-Jones, the world of education and lifelong learning is becoming an interesting and challenging arena for cognitive neuroscience in its endeavour to discover new contexts for research. The constantly increasing number of shared object of interest between the experts of

neurosciences and education highlight the need for a dialogue on lifelong learning, which could benefit both disciplines. The *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* research and development work was carried out in real, authentic conditions in which the experiences of the participants were genuinely heard.

10.2. Assessment of the research and development work

The purpose of this research and development work was to seek answers to the possibilities of art and culture as promoters of brain health. The evolution of the four service models could not be foreseen at the beginning of the project. The service models were developed and reorganised throughout the process, and even during this reporting phase. The writers have had an active role in the development of the service models and in the planning and implementation of the art activities, and they recognise their role in the interpretative process. Understanding took place in cycles, as a result of the activities and reflective thinking. In the art activities of the service models, the writers have acted as reflective researchers and developers, striving to be open to constant development. In other words, a reflective approach has guided the activities (Elliot 1991, 23). The pedagogic plans were changed and complemented as necessary. Exploring one's work and the possibilities for change it contains can only take place with reflective thinking once routines and practices are somehow broken. Previous research was utilised in the planning, execution and assessment of the *Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health* service models. Art and culture were brought into a new context: brain and memory activation. The observations, genuine experiences of the participants and the analysis of their narratives within the research and development work have provided new knowledge about combining art, culture and brain health. In this research and development work, which applies the strategy of action research, the credibility of the work can be assessed by considering whether the work and its theory have produced better new practices. This research and development project produced four new kinds of service models for promoting brain health, as well as this report, which contains qualitative, descriptive information about the process and the experiences of the participants concerning art and culture in promoting brain and memory functions. When considering the generalisation of the results, we must note that in this research and development project, knowledge is understood as something experience and narrative based. This perspective opens up possibilities for many kinds of truths. (Kvale 1989, 75–90; Eisner 1991, 37; Eisner 2002, 30; Malmivirta 2011, 280–281) Here, we have come to the conclusion that art and culture can provide keys for promoting brain health as described above.

All participants in the research and development work have learned something new. The artists involved have expanded the theoretical framework of their professional operations. In addition to this, the artists reported that the research and development work had enriched their art. The development and research work as well as writing the process report have enriched and reinforced their understanding of the significance of art education and pedagogics in a field previously alien to them: combining art and culture with brain health.

The service models developed and described here are now available for use by the third sector, and can be developed further to suit any particular context.



11. A word from the third sector operators

11.1. Culture creates joy and well-being

*Executive director Mari Luonsinen and service and development manager Hanne-Maarit Suokas,
Salon Muistiyhdistys ry and Varsinais-Suomen Muistiyhdistys ry*

Memory disorders form a significant illness group which increases the need of the elderly to use social and health care services, which is why they will pose a significant challenge in the future too. The number of people suffering from memory disorders will grow majorly in the coming decades. However, memory disorders do not affect just the elderly: they occur also within the working-age population. At the moment, there are more 120,000 people suffering from memory disorders in Finland, and every year some 13,000 new cases are diagnosed. Every day, 36 people in Finland are diagnosed with a progressive memory disorder. In addition to this, memory disorders affect many family members, colleagues, neighbours and friends of the patients indirectly.

The Alzheimer Society of Finland and the local memory associations operating under it have made promotion of brain health one of the focal points for the coming years. The prevention of memory disorders also plays an important part in the National Memory Programme 2012–2020. Reducing the risk of memory illnesses and delaying the potential occurrence of illness are the cornerstones in creating a brain healthy society. (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden ministeriö 2012) Traditionally, the role of a healthy lifestyle, nutrition and exercise has been emphasised in brain health maintenance. We also know that intellectual challenges and an active social life create new neural connections and therefore positively affect our memory. A well-networked brain is also more resistant to changes caused by memory disorders. Delaying memory disorders by five years could, in fifty years, half the number of patients diagnosed with memory disorders (Brookmeyer 1998; 88: 1337–1342) and add more healthy, vital years to old age.

Progressive memory disorders are studied extensively throughout the world. The cause of Alzheimer's is still unknown, but we know the risk factors which increase the risk of memory disorders. Many of the risk factors of Alzheimer's disease are connected to lifestyle choices, but not using one's brain also increases the risk of falling ill.

THE HUMAN BRAIN

The adaptation of the brain is a lifelong process. Environmental factors, social relationships and intellectual challenges, to mention a few, all affect the development of the brain. Activating the brain creates new neural networks, and lifelong learning is possible as long as the brain is sufficiently healthy. (Muistiliitto 2014) We remember the things we like and consider significant. We learn and think in different ways, and traces are left in our memory in various ways. What we do have in common is the desire to reminisce about important matters and to encounter beauty. In addition to this, research indicates that art and culture are connected to how we experience our health, our improved ability to work and a good life (Liikanen, 2010). According to some studies, actively engaging in cultural activities and hobbies may add more years onto life, on average, from two to three years. Therefore, cultural interests have proven health-promoting effects, just as exercise, a healthy lifestyle and the right nutrition do. (Hyyppä 2013, 20) As we age, the maintenance of a positive approach and preventing loneliness are important factors in avoiding memory disorders.

BRAIN HEALTH WITH ART AND CULTURE

The promotion of brain health is a well-known topic in Finland. However, we need new ways in which to motivate healthy pensioners to maintain their brain health. Talking about brain health and working for it do not have to mean serious practice or listing risk factors. The brain can be challenged with new experiences, new habits and breaking old routines. Art can help to create a positive and tolerant atmosphere, in which the meaningfulness of the activities and the joy of being engaged in them are clearly visible. Art in itself, both appreciating and making art, have positive effects in the brain. Furthermore, the pleasure from the aesthetic experience increases these positive effects. Motivation has a great role in learning and remembering. We all have our personal life histories and cultural worlds. Indeed, art and culture are always experienced personally, through our very personal memories. Processing memories with the means of art is a healing process, which fulfils the age-related need to go through and process the life lived.

The role of the third sector in promoting brain health could also be utilised further in various ways in the future. Many organisations have extensive knowledge, skills, will and competence for voluntary work and peer support activities, for instance, and more could be invested in this. In the future, it is necessary to consider whether new kinds of methods, in which the different areas of art and culture are used in peer group activities for the elderly, can be developed to promote brain health and well-being.

In addition to this, economic resources should be directed increasingly from the treatment of illnesses to the prevention of illnesses. On the other hand, in the future we will need more and more cross-sectorial cooperation and activities, such as was carried out in this project, in operations that promote health and well-being. The results achieved in this project prove that culture, experiencing art and making art genuinely affect brain health. Making art and sharing it in a group gives the group participants the feeling of being a part of something important, even as they age.

11.2. On the many possibilities of dance

Managing director Lotta Skaffari, Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland

The Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland has several years of experience of taking the art of dance into new contexts. The association has developed practices for cultural well-being services, for instance in various projects (*Tanssikummi, Kummi kotona*) and as a model or structure (Honkanen & Skaffari 2012; Honkanen, Skaffari & Solkio 2013). This work fits well with the tasks of a regional dance centre: according to the principal financier of the centre, the Ministry of Education and Culture, these tasks include development of the field of operation, promotion of the regional and social availability and accessibility of dance, and, in close connection with these tasks, improving the employment situation of dance artists. The initiation of *Genius Body*, the new service concept of the regional centre, meant, from the perspective of the association, expanding the forms of activity of the centre. The genuine cross-sectorial nature of the project, the performance targets for the activities, as well as the new, challenging perspective created based on these targets enhanced the motivation to develop the project. The action research approach was ideal in a field in which participatory, critical and communal starting points are recognised both at the level of practice as well as research (please see Lehtikoinen 2014, 218).

The developer of *Genius Body*, dance artist Jonna Aaltonen, presents her development work elsewhere in this publication. The effects of the exercises were displayed at many levels and had several mutual positive effects. Even just watching someone else move enhances the effects of your own movements. Due to these multi-dimensional effects on many levels, it is possible to achieve significant results even in a relatively short time period. The practical significance of art lies in its ability to move the senses, emotions and the mind in a way that is difficult to achieve with any other means (Bardy 2007, 21). The special condition of dance is that it always moves not only the senses and the mind, but also the body. As proven by cognitive neuroscience, the mirror neurons located in the motor cortex of the brain fire both when we move as well as when we watch others move (please see Lehtikoinen 2014, 136–137). This action is autonomic, which may in part explain the successful results gained from using dance in working with patients suffering from dementia.

The work of the artists in *Genius Body* complied with the human values intrinsic to community art. The activities in community art are situation-specific, participant-based, caring and process-based. The concept of human beings in community arts emphasises respect, diversity, individual personality, and equality. Existence is a value in itself, and it cannot be measured with our accomplishments. (Please see Bardy 2007, for example) However, in the *Genius Body* project, measuring was essential. The basis for the development work in the project was anchored in art pedagogics. The clear objective set for the activities, that is, promoting brain health, is what differentiates this process from community arts. If differences like this are not made explicit, the applied use of the arts is in danger of declining back to that vague state from which conceptual understanding has emerged only recently. To ensure the use of dance in well-being services in the future, both starting points with their respective objectives are significant and contain enormous potential for development. The Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland will also implement these focal points in the future. The communicative absolute value of art touches its audience; while the community emphasis creates experiences of participation. But why settle for just this and not use art or its methods as tools, if these tools turn out to be feasible, implementation motivated and competent and the results better than expected? Art will not break from use.

About the Authors

Aaltonen Jonna, dance artist, Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland

Jonna Aaltonen graduated from Turun konservatorio in 1995 and now works as a freelance dance artist. She has worked with modern dance performances as well as dance theatre, musical and opera productions. During her international career of 20 years, Aaltonen has danced in more than 70 productions, working with various choreographers. Aaltonen has had contracts with dance theatres Tanssiteatteri Eri, Norrdans and Älvsborgsteater in Sweden, as well as the VolksOpera ballet in Vienna, Austria. During the 2007–2008 season, she performed at the Royal Swedish Opera, Kungliga Operan, under choreographer Mats Ek in the production Orphée. In addition to this, Aaltonen had danced in several freelance productions both in Finland and abroad and performed in various European countries, Canada and Japan. Since 2006, she has been based in Finland and worked as a freelance dancer. Furthermore, Aaltonen works as a rehearser, director, choreographer, choreographer's assistant and dance instructor. In the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development project, Jonna Aaltonen planned, directed and developed the Genius Body service model.

Kivelä Suvi, Master of Social Sciences, Project Planner, Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS)

Suvi Kivelä graduated from the University of Turku in 2004, majoring in sociology. She currently works as a project planner for the health and well-being unit at TUAS. In the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development project, Kivelä worked as a project planner and participated in the planning, execution, assessment and communications of all four service models. Previously, Kivelä worked as a project planner in the regional association for child protection, Varsinais-Suomen lastensuojelujärjestöt ry, and as a research assistant at the Research Unit for the Sociology of Education (RUSE) at the University of Turku, in research related to preventing the marginalisation of young people, the training guarantee model, and learning by doing and experiencing in universities of applied sciences. Kivelä has worked at TUAS since 2012. Today, she works as the working pair of the instructor of the Lasten ja nuorten osallisuus ('Sense of participation in children and young people') research group and has been involved in the preparatory work of several projects related to children, young people, families and active aging.

Luonsinen Mari, Executive Director, Salon Muistiyhdistys ry

Mari Luonsinen is the executive director of Salo's memory association Salon Muistiyhdistys ry. Salon Muistiyhdistys has been actively involved in spreading information about the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work in its networks. In addition to this, the results gained from the project have been presented in various events organised by the association.

Malmivirta Helena, Doctor of Philosophy (Education), Bachelor of Education (Kindergarten Education), lecturer, researcher, project planner, Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS)

Helena Malmivirta defended her doctoral thesis in 2011. In her thesis, she combined art with the social, and developed art pedagogics based on the Deweyan approach of experiential art learning. The pedagogics developed and described in her doctoral research as well as the results of the pedagogics have been applied in the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work. Malmivirta planned the TEHU project in the Turku region and in that work built a bridge between art, culture and brain health. She was responsible for the project as a whole and

acted as a pedagogic planner, instructor, developer and researcher in the research and development work of the four service models. For 25 years, Helena Malmivirta worked as the lecturer of arts and education in the School of Health and Social Care at Oulu University of Applied Sciences, after which, in 2011, she became the project manager of the national Hymykuopat – hyvinvointipalveluiden monialaiset yhteistuotannot (‘Dimples – multisectoral joint productions in the welfare services sector’) project. Currently Malmivirta acts as a lecturer, trainer, researcher and project planner in the health and well-being unit at the Turku University of Applied Sciences and runs the Aktiivinen ikääntyminen (‘Active aging’) research group.

Mäkipuro Satu-Maaria, artist, Salon taiteilijaseura ry

Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro graduated as with a Master of Arts degree in 1992 from the School of Art and Design, today part of the Aalto University. She works as a graphic designer, artist and set designer in her own company and teaches art at Salo’s community college Salon kansalaisopisto. Since 2004, Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro has been working with several art and culture projects aimed at the elderly and residents of retirement homes, which have been produced by the artists’ association Salon taiteilijaseura and the various groups of artists in the area. In the research and development work of the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health project, Satu-Maaria Mäkipuro acted as the pedagogic planner, instructor and developer of the Yellow Cottage and a Patch of Potato service model in cooperation with Malmivirta and Kivelä.

Puranen Tiina, puppet artist

In 1997, Tiina Puranen graduated from the puppet theatre unit of Turun taiteen ja viestinnän oppilaitos (TUTVO, today a part of TUAS) with a Bachelor of Culture and Arts degree (instructor of performance arts). Since her graduation, Puranen has worked as a freelance puppet artist in various performances, productions and projects. She has worked with applied arts, particularly with children with special needs, young people and the elderly. In 2009, Puranen was one of the founders of the RahtiTeatteri/FraktTeatern touring theatre, which is where she mainly works today. In the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work, Tiina Puranen worked as a planner, instructor and developer of The stage of memories service model in collaboration with Malmivirta and Kivelä.

Skaffari Lotta, Managing Director, Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland

Lotta Skaffari is responsible for reinforcing the operating conditions and structures of the independent field of dance. In addition to dance productions, the core task of the association is the development of cultural well-being services.

Suokas Hanne-Maarit, occupational therapist

Hanne-Maarit Suokas is the service and development manager of memory disorder association Varsinais-Suomen Muistiyhdistys, responsible for the development and administration of its operations. In the Art and Culture – Keys for Better Brain Health research and development work, Suokas acted as one of the planners, instructors and developers of the What do I want to remember from my life? service model, in collaboration with Malmivirta and Kivelä.





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