

ATOL: Art Therapy OnLine

Small Experiential Group

Dr. Marian Liebmann

I offered to run a workshop at the International Conference because I thought it would be an interesting experience. I imagined that workshop facilitators would come from all over the world, so I was quite surprised to find at the preparation meeting that most of the facilitators were from the UK and some were members of staff on the Goldsmiths art psychotherapy training. That, in itself, was an interesting experience. Timing was quite tight, but fortunately we each had a Goldsmiths student to set up the room and prepare materials. I enjoyed my group – it was an opportunity for me and them to meet a small number of participants from many different countries over three sessions. My group included people from the UK (including Northern Ireland), US, Canada and Poland. While some people used the workshop to reflect on conference themes, others used the opportunity to work on issues in their lives that they had simply not had space to do before, in the hurly-burly of hectic timetables. Although the range of materials was limited (dry materials only), it was amazing how creative people were in what they produced. We arranged to have a short time for sharing at the end, and this was very moving in the last session. People had formed real bonds through the art work and sharing. I was grateful for the feedback groups for facilitators, as it was interesting to see how different some of the groups turned out. At times it was difficult to hold these in the time available, as some of the facilitators also had other roles in the conference. I

think it was vital to have this opportunity in an otherwise packed timetable of papers and presentations.

Dr. Marian Liebmann O.B.E.

Bristol Central Recovery Team, Avon & Wiltshire Partnership Mental Health NHS Trust;
Bristol University, Visiting Scholar.