

WHEEL OF FACES AND LAUGHTER

Creativity applied to sadness (12/12)

DESCRIPTION

“Wheel of faces and laughter” is a laughter therapy technique. Laughter therapy is a psychotherapeutic technique that uses laughter as a fundamental tool. The laughter therapy technique consists of the use of different exercises, activities and dynamics through which a person or a group of people is led to a feeling of disinhibition that makes them reach the binomial rehearsed laughter-spontaneous laughter, which will lead them to experience its physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual benefits.

The laughter is a manifestation of joy and well-being and, ultimately, an emotional release. Laughter can generate direct physiological changes in the musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, immune and neuroendocrine systems, which are associated with a beneficial effect in the short and long term. In addition, laughter may lead to more positive emotional states, which in turn may have direct beneficial effects on health and quality of life. Moreover, laughter can optimise strategies to combat stress, anxiety and sadness, as well as increase subjective pain tolerance, and finally, it can increase an individual's social competences, who will consequently be more approachable and more satisfied in their social relationships.

The selected laughter therapy activity is the "wheel of grimaces and laughter", which consists of handing out balloons and markers to all participants, each of whom is responsible for drawing a face/emoticon on their balloon. The balloons will be passed from participant to participant and they will all have to imitate the faces that have been drawn on them. This will induce them to laugh spontaneously at themselves and with their buddies.



<https://creatingwellbeing.eu/>



Disclaimer: The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

OBJECTIVES

The “Wheel of faces and laughter” activity aims to:

- Use play and smiling to contribute to improved health and an increase in general well-being of elderly.
- To contribute to the good health and mood of the elderly by enhancing their happiness and joy.
- Combat sadness and reduce negative moments in the lives of older people.
- As it is a group therapy in which ridiculous grimaces are made, it is essential to break the barrier of embarrassment. This can help to: Improve interpersonal relationships and the communication and teamwork skills of older people and their careers.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

The resources and materials needed to carry out this activity are:

- Balloons
- Permanent markers
- Chairs (if participants want to sit down in the activity, same number of chairs as participants)

IMPLEMENTATION - INSTRUCTION

This exercise can be developed with different groups of people, from children to older adults. The materials needed are balloons and markers with permanent ink.

The coordinator, animator or facilitator of the activity has to give a balloon to each participant to blow up and tie. If the elderly people with whom we are doing the activity have difficulty blowing up the balloons, we can hand out the balloons already inflated or hand out inflators. Each person should also be given an indelible or permanent black marker (the ink should remain fixed and not rub off). Individually they should draw a face/emoticon/grimace on the balloon, each participant can do it however they want.

The participants then form a circle, standing or sitting on chairs. One person, chosen by the facilitator, will show their balloon and imitate the face they have drawn on the balloon and pass the balloon to another person who has to repeat the same action, show the balloon, imitate the face and pass the balloon to another person. When the balloon is back in the possession of the person who drew it, the action is repeated with another balloon and participant. This is repeated until all participants have imitated their

own and each other's balloon. If there are many participants, two or more balloons can be drawn at the same time, passing one to the right and one to the left, for example.

Laughter will emerge spontaneously as the older adults imitate the balloon faces and see their peers do the same. The aim of the activity is to keep everyone laughing and happy. If laughter does not break out, the facilitator can induce the participants to laugh. This can be done in the following way: each time a participant makes his or her face, he or she has to repeat the sound "ha" several times, and his or her peers have to follow, so that everyone laughs as a group.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

If we don't have the necessary materials (balloons and permanent markers) to do the activity, we can prepare a variation of the activity, which is explained below. The members of the group should form a big circle sitting on chairs.

The facilitator reports that one of them has caught the laughter. The facilitator chooses the infected member and asks him/her to spread the laughter to one of his/her colleagues.

To do this, he must give it to the person on his right. To pass on the laughter to another person, he/she must use the laughter and the body postures that can be produced when laughing. The condition is that you do not try to force laughter on the other person by tickling them. The person receiving the laughter will not accept it until they feel really infected or stimulated. The person receiving the laughter will actively laugh, while others may laugh or remain silent. and pass on the laughter to another partner by grimacing, gesturing until they laugh, and so on.

We can also choose to do any other activity that is included in the laughter therapy technique, we could search the internet for "laughter therapy activities for older people" and choose another one that we see suitable for our target audience and with the necessary materials.

EXPECTED RESULTS

With the development of this activity, it is expected that caregivers/participants will acquire new options or tools on how to manage their own and others' sadness.

According to the scientific literature, as far as laughter therapy is concerned, it is shown to be a useful tool in generating positive affect. Therefore, it can be affirmed that laughter therapy has beneficial effects on health by promoting attitudes and feelings of happiness and optimism towards everyday life, increasing perceived social support and providing attitudes of personal growth.



<https://creatingwellbeing.eu/>



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Disclaimer: The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.