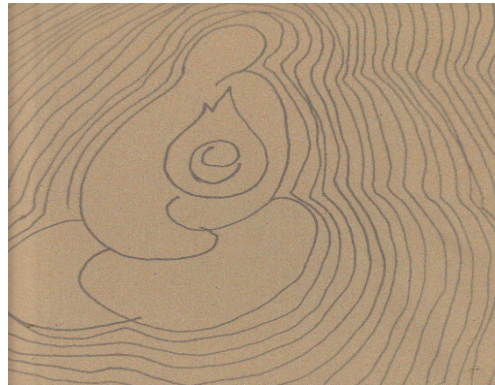


## **Mamma's Scrapbook; A Sensory Storytelling Project – Racehill Community Orchard - Whitehawk**



### **What is Mamma's scrapbook?**

Mamma's scrapbook is for mothers & babies and young children. We invite you to bring your baby to come and explore a range of natural crafts and creative writing in nature. We provide space for mums to find a sense of community, sharing stories of lived experience of motherhood. We aim to support creative collaboration, improve mental health and foster connection with nature.

We will move through the senses of sight, smell, taste, touch, sound, with a range of creative activities such as clay and natural dyes. We will actively build our relationship with nature to support wellbeing and have creative conversations in a supported environment. We'll guide you to explore your sensory experiences, creating reflections through creative writing practices and natural arts & crafts.

In the final weeks we will bring this all together, weaving stories and creative pieces into a collective set of stories and artworks. We will work with you to select from your creative material what to keep for yourself and what to share as part of a collaborative piece. You will decide what you wish to share and what you wish to keep personal, there is no obligation to share anything you are not comfortable with.

Together, we will create an installation featuring written and oral stories, and craft pieces, forming a mixed-media "collage" of stories which we can showcase as part of a family/community open day. Personal scrapbooks will be available for you to take home, & a collaborative scrapbook will be printed for you and other mothers in the group to keep.

This is not a therapy, but does have some therapeutic qualities, and is delivered by skilled practitioners who will support you to explore creative work and nature connection. We are not a mental health treatment service- but a collaborative arts group. If you need additional support around any mental health concerns we can signpost you to available services and you can also visit your GP or contact Sussex Mental health line by calling 111 and choosing 'Mental Health'.

## **Who are we?**

You can find out more about the team on the [Mamma's scrapbook](#) webpage.

## **What's involved?**

The sessions will run 1 x a week for 6 weeks. Each week, we will follow the same flexible structure. Over the 6 weeks we will explore herb binding, clay work, natural dyes and pigment making, leaf printing, creative movement and working with sound, cookery and collage. We will incorporate bitesize creative writing techniques and have space for sharing and journalling. Towards the end of the project we will select works to create a collective 'scrapbook' and installation of artworks to present at a family/community open day. Art works will be shared and selected with consent and only artworks you are comfortable to share will be shared. At the end of the project, we will create a collective printed scrapbook for you to keep.

## **Expectations**

During the project we will provide a flexible framework for participants to work safely with creative expression and processes. Each week, we will reiterate the following health and safety agreement and ground rules to reinforce these and ensure everyone's emotional and physical safety. By signing consent forms at the beginning of the project Participants are agreeing to adhere to the health and safety agreement and ground rules.

### **Health and Safety brief**

- You are responsible for your baby at all times. We have a good ratio to support you with this at any point in the session if you need it. Babies must not be left alone.
- If we are doing a meditation and you are invited to close your eyes, there will be a facilitator with eyes open making sure everyone is safe. You can also keep your eyes open with a soft gaze if you prefer.
- If we have a fire, there will always be a facilitator tending to it. We will have a fire bucket next to it, gauntlet, a first aid kit and fire blanket within reach. Please observe 'red dragon, green dragon' (we will explain this during the sessions) and walk outside of the designated seating area, not inside the red zone if there is a fire, this can also model good fire safety to babies and children as they grow.
- Please be aware if you have a hot drink of babies getting hold of these. Please keep out of their reach.
- If using tools, we will ensure they are monitored and kept away unless in use. We will demonstrate safe use and supervise when in use, including safe transportation. We will inventory tools to ensure they are all accounted for.
- We have a compost toilet, we will show everyone where this is.
- Please stay in the site zone during the session unless we are heading off of site as a group for an activity.
- Please wear sensible footwear and clothing for the day. Close toed shoes, long sleeves and trousers and warm things/water proofs if needed on the day. Please ensure babies are wrapped up warmly.
- If there are toxic or phototoxic plants onsite we will inform participants of this and how to identify in order to avoid. This is less of an issue during winter months.
- If there is a first aid emergency, each team member is trained to support it. We are first aid trained and have a first aid kit and burns kit here. We have an emergency first aid action plan. Please ask for help immediately. We always have a charged phone to call emergency services if required.
- We will endeavour to run every planned week. If we ever need to cancel due to particularly adverse weather or staff sickness where we cannot get another facilitator in time, we may need to reschedule the session. We check the weather regularly to ensure safe weather conditions to provide outdoor work.

### **Ground Rules**

The following ground rules are designed to keep everyone safe during each session of the project.

- The session structure is designed to support everyone in entering a grounded state and add these skills to their toolbox. Please come to the sessions with openness to engage in these. These can support holding the sessions in an emotionally safe way.
- Please let us know if you are unwell and cannot attend so that we know you are ok. If you attend and need to leave, please speak to a facilitator so we can account for you and support you if needed.
- Nature connection and creative work can be emotive, or bring up unprocessed experiences and feelings. These are welcome in this space. However please be aware of your own safety and the safety of others, only share in the group things that feel safe to do so.
- If you do find things coming up that feel distressing, or if someone else has spoken about things that feel triggering, please do take a moment and speak to one of the facilitators if you need to. We are here to support you.
- If someone else is sharing and you find you need to take a break, please do take a moment to go and get a drink or take some space in the natural space.
- Please look after yourself physically, if you need the toilet, to change your baby, need a snack or a drink or need to feed your baby, or you need to move around or take a break, please feel free to do this at any point. If you are very tired on the day, as can be often with babies, you are welcome to come and participate as much as feels ok for you, you are also welcome to come and just sit back and take in the activity happening around you.
- Check in with yourself emotionally, take breaks and ask for help when needed.
- If you have created a piece of art, written something or shared a verbal experience that feels too personal to share as part of the collaboration, please be aware that this is entirely yours, and would only be shared with your consent. You reserve the right to retain your creative work as your own personal property if it feels too personal and you do not wish to share it.
- Everything we share in the group is confidential. It's ok to talk about your experience here but please do not mention names or talk about other people's experiences that they have shared. Some people may choose to add things to shared artworks, but this will be done through carefully supported curation and at their own discretion.

### **Consent**

We request consent prior to participating to ensure participants know what they are signing up for. We will call participants prior to commencing to ensure this verbally as well and to ensure that they meet the risk agreements in order to keep themselves safe and for the safety of the group in general.

The project will involve an eventual element of showcasing work and presenting to the family/friends/the community. By reading the participant information and signing consent to participate, participants agree to taking part in a participatory arts project that will be shown to the public. Participants will be at the heart of the project and curation and further consent and agreement will be sought for particular artworks and writing to be shared – No works will be shown that make participants feel vulnerable, exposed or uncomfortable, these may be kept for participants personal use. The same applies for any photos taken during the project that may have participants in them. Additionally, the outcomes of the creative practice are purely a byproduct that previous participants have expressed a wish to share, there is no pressure to produce, the real work is in the enjoyment of taking part and playing with different activities.

The project is specifically designed to support mothers' wellbeing and connection with peer support, nature and creativity. As such, a public installation may state these factors in publicity. However, the public face of the group will not name participants specifically, their conditions or circumstances or their involvement with NHS services. The group is described as a 'closed, 6 week group of mothers to support wellbeing, community, creativity and nature connection'. Participants may disclose information pertaining to their own experiences at their own discretion, and will be supported to navigate this to ensure emotional safety.

### **Referrals and safety**

Participants can self-refer to this group. The group is open to mothers who require perinatal mental health or other kinds of support, but is not a condition of participation and mothers from a range of experiences may come to the group. We do not need to be informed of confidential information that is not relevant, however we do need to know that mothers who attend are able to keep themselves safe in the group. While we do not exclude those who have experienced more severe mental health needs, the group may not be appropriate for those currently experiencing issues that may affect their ability to participate safely in a creative, nature based group. We ask specific questions in the referral form in relation to risk and we can call you for a chat prior to the group starting to ensure you feel safe to take part.

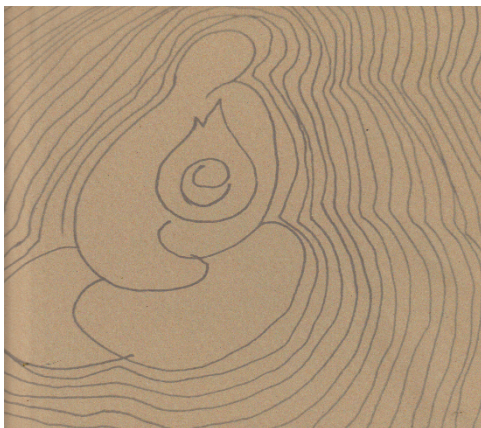
If we should feel that it is not safe at this time for you to attend, we can suggest returning to possible future groups we may run. If we are at any point concerned for the safety or wellbeing of a prospective or current participant, we will make a short term safety plan and our trained team will signpost onto relevant services.

### **Inclusivity, adjustments and access**

Please let us know in advance of any adjustments you may need to access the project, including communication support or support with accessing the site. We have a small access budget to support transport for those who need it. Please note this is a small budget and will be assessed for suitability on a case by case basis.

### **Contact**

For further information please contact the creative director, Caroline Fortune on [caroline@mycelianetwork.co.uk](mailto:caroline@mycelianetwork.co.uk)



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