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**ERA Project**

**WP3 Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit**

**ANKARA HACI BAYRAM VELI UNIVERSITY**

# **Eco-Marbling Art for Elderly Well-Being**

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## 1. Basic Information

<b>Title of the Tool:</b>	<b>Eco-Marbling Art for Elderly Well-Being</b>
<b>Required Setting:</b> <i>(Tick or describe where it takes place — e.g., garden, classroom, community space, online, offline, etc.)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indoor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outdoor <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid This tool will be useful to implement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in AHBVU workshops, art studios, or classrooms,</li> <li>• or in rural community centers, elderly associations, or local municipal spaces.</li> </ul> Both settings allow safe, supervised access to marbling materials. Outdoor extensions may include natural dye demonstrations or short nature walks to discuss colors, textures, and environmental inspiration.

In this tool, participants are guided through the process of producing marbled artworks using a combination of traditional Ebru methods and eco-friendly natural pigments. The tool supports sensory engagement, emotional expression, and environmental awareness by inviting participants to observe the flow of colors, touch natural pigments, and create patterns that reflect memories and personal meanings.

The tool helps to the following steps of the activity:

- **Introduction:** Short presentation on nature-based pigments, sustainability, and the cultural roots of marbling.
- **Preparation:** Facilitators prepare the simplified marbling tray, eco-friendly dyes (e.g., walnut hull extract, beetroot, turmeric), and natural brushes.
- **Artistic Process:** Participants drop pigments onto the water surface, observe the movement, and create designs using combs or sticks.
- **Transfer & Reflection:** The completed patterns are transferred onto paper; participants reflect on colors, emotions, and natural inspirations.
- **Discussion:** Facilitators connect the experience to environmental awareness, natural cycles, and sustainable art practices.

This tool directly contributes to ERA objectives by giving assistance to the implementation of the activity:

- Developing a culturally relevant, eco-conscious creative tool
- Customizing marbling techniques to support the needs of rural elderly participants
- Providing replicable training content for professionals and practitioners

## 2. Connection to Environmental education and Eco-Art Therapy Principles:

This tool integrates environmental education and eco-art therapy principles by combining traditional marbling art with sustainable, nature-based materials. The activity introduces

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elderly participants to the ecological origins of pigments, natural dye sources and environmentally responsible art practices.

Through the use of natural colors—such as walnut hull, turmeric, beetroot and earth pigments—participants gain awareness of how artistic materials can be sourced responsibly and used without harming the environment. Facilitators briefly discuss natural cycles, plant-based dyes and the concept of “leaving no trace,” reinforcing sustainable thinking.

From an eco-art therapy perspective, marbling offers a calming, sensory-rich experience that promotes emotional regulation, mindfulness and cognitive stimulation. The flowing movement of colors on water encourages visual focus and relaxation, while the tactile and observational elements help elderly participants reconnect with their senses and memories. The unpredictability and natural fluidity of marbling support self-expression without pressure to create a “perfect” artwork.

The activity also fosters a deeper emotional relationship with nature by highlighting the organic qualities of color, texture and movement. Participants are invited to reflect on how natural pigments remind them of seasons, landscapes or personal experiences. This reflective process strengthens environmental appreciation and nurtures a sense of responsibility for local ecosystems.

Overall, Eco-Marbling integrates environmental learning with artistic exploration, allowing elderly individuals to develop ecological awareness while benefiting from the therapeutic effects of creative expression.

### 3. Facilitator Guidance

Phase	Description
<b>Facilitator’s Role:</b>	<p>The facilitator plays a supportive, encouraging and safety-oriented role throughout the Eco-Marbling activity. Their primary aim is to foster emotional comfort, creative freedom and ecological awareness, rather than evaluating artistic quality. Facilitators should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide clear, simple step-by-step instructions suited to elderly participants.</li> <li>● Introduce natural pigments and explain their environmental significance.</li> <li>● Observe physical limitations (tremors, limited hand strength, visual impairment) and offer adaptive supports.</li> <li>● Encourage participants to explore marbling patterns without fear of “mistakes,” reinforcing acceptance and mindfulness.</li> <li>● Promote reflective dialogue about colors, memories and feelings evoked by the marbling process.</li> <li>● Maintain a calm, patient tone and adjust pacing according to participants’ energy levels.</li> <li>● Monitor safety—ensuring non-slip floors, stable seating and proper table height.</li> </ul>
<b>Tips for Implementation:</b>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Prepare trays and pigments in advance to avoid fatigue among elderly participants.</p>

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Phase	Description
	<p>Use large-handled droppers or brushes for participants with reduced fine motor skills.</p> <p>Offer both natural and traditional pigments but highlight eco-friendly options.</p> <p>Begin with a short breathing exercise to enhance focus and reduce anxiety.</p> <p>Use verbal cues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>“Watch how the color floats—like leaves on water.”</i></li> <li>• <i>“There is no right or wrong pattern; every movement tells a story.”</i></li> </ul> <p>Allow participants to assist each other to strengthen social engagement.</p> <p>Play light background nature sounds (optional) to increase relaxation.</p> <p>Provide minimal but supportive feedback (“Your colors flow beautifully”).</p> <p>Encourage pacing—allow breaks to avoid over-stimulation or fatigue.</p>
Adaptations:	<p><b>For limited hand strength:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use lightweight tools, thicker brushes, or droppers with soft bulbs.</li> <li>• Provide hand-over-hand support when needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>For cognitive decline:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use short, repeated instructions and visual cue cards.</li> <li>• Demonstrate each action instead of relying solely on verbal guidance.</li> </ul> <p><b>For visual impairments:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use high-contrast natural pigments (yellow turmeric, dark walnut, bright beetroot).</li> <li>• Place white paper under trays to enhance visibility.</li> </ul> <p><b>For mobility issues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring marbling trays to the participants instead of expecting movement.</li> <li>• Use adjustable-height tables or lap trays.</li> </ul> <p><b>For emotional sensitivity:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow participants to skip steps that feel overwhelming.</li> <li>• Provide grounding techniques (deep breathing, touching natural brushes or pigments).</li> </ul> <p><b>For rural settings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use locally available pigments (earth tones, walnut, onion skin, pomegranate skin).</li> <li>• Incorporate short outdoor moments to observe natural colors (weather permitting).</li> </ul>

#### 4. Measure Impact and Effectiveness:

##### Pre-and post-intervention assessments:

Use the same items before and after the activity to measure change.

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## A. Environmental Awareness & Engagement with Nature

- I feel connected to natural colors and elements found in the environment.
- I recognize that natural materials (plants, earth pigments) can be used in art.
- I am more aware of how nature influences colors, patterns and textures.
- I pay more attention to environmental details around me.

## B. Understanding of Environmental Concepts & Sustainable Behaviour

- I understand the difference between natural pigments and synthetic materials.
- I know why eco-friendly art materials are beneficial for the environment.
- I am more willing to reuse or recycle materials in my daily life.
- I make an effort to reduce waste and save energy at home.

## C. Artistic Confidence & Creative Expression

- I feel confident participating in marbling (Ebru) activities.
- I can express my emotions or memories through colors and patterns.
- I enjoy working with marbling tools, brushes and natural pigments.

## D. Well-Being Indicators

- I feel calm and relaxed during the marbling activity.
- The movement of colors on water helps me feel emotionally balanced.
- I feel less stressed after participating in this activity.
- I enjoy connecting with others during creative sessions.

## E. Cognitive & Sensory Engagement

- This activity helps me remember past experiences or stories.
- Working with flowing colors improves my focus and attention.
- I can recognize different natural colors and textures more easily.

## F. Short Open-Ended Questions

- **Before:** “What do colors or natural pigments remind you of?”
- **After:** “What did you learn or feel while doing marbling with natural pigments?”

## G. Facilitator Observational Indicators

- Participant remained engaged throughout the process.
- Participant demonstrated improved sensory focus.
- Participant interacted socially with peers.
- Participant expressed positive emotions or memories.
- Participant handled materials safely and comfortably.

## 5. Environmental and Sustainability Dimension

<p><b>Eco-aspect:</b></p>	<p>Eco-Marbling promotes environmental awareness by emphasising the use of <b>natural, plant-based pigments</b> instead of synthetic dyes. Participants learn how colors can be created from sustainable sources such as walnut hulls, beetroot, turmeric, pomegranate skin and earth pigments. This introduces elderly individuals to the concept of <b>eco-friendly artistic practice</b>, showing that creativity does not require harmful chemicals or disposable materials.</p> <p>The marbling activity visually demonstrates how natural elements behave in water, helping participants understand <b>natural processes, fluid dynamics</b>, and the <b>organic movement of color</b>. Facilitators highlight the ecological origins of each material and explain how traditional marbling historically depended on natural resources, reinforcing the link between cultural heritage and environmental protection.</p> <p>The exercise exemplifies sustainable conduct by utilising reusable trays, low-impact materials, and biodegradable colours in a minimal-waste manner. Participants learn how making tiny, imaginative choices—like using natural pigments or recycling water—contributes to environmental stewardship.</p>
<p><b>Community Impact:</b></p>	<p>The Eco-Marbling activity has the potential to create a ripple effect within rural communities by showcasing environmentally responsible art. When participants’ marbled artworks are exhibited in local community spaces, elderly centers or university hallways, these displays raise awareness about the beauty and value of eco-friendly practices.</p> <p>The activity also strengthens community cohesion by bringing together academics, elderly participants and local residents through a shared creative experience. Intergenerational interactions—such as students helping older adults—help transfer cultural knowledge about marbling while also exchanging environmental wisdom.</p> <p>Additionally, the activity encourages rural communities to explore and celebrate <b>local natural resources</b>, inspiring future workshops or community-led initiatives focused on natural dyes, waste reduction or sustainable art. This contributes to a broader cultural shift toward environmental mindfulness.</p>

## 6. Case studies and best practices

<p><b>Title of the Case Study or Best practice</b></p>	<p><b>Eco-Marbling Workshop for Rural Elderly: Natural Pigments and Emotional Well-Being (by AHBV Yaşlılık</b></p>
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	<b>Çalışmaları Uygulama ve Araştırma Merkezi, Aging Studies Application and Research Center</b>
<b>Location / Context:</b>	<p>The workshop was implemented in two settings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>AHBVU Faculty Multi-Purpose Hall (Ankara)</b> – academic and controlled environment with university facilitators.</li> <li><b>Rural Community Center</b> – elderly participants (ages 65–82) from a small rural settlement near Ankara.</li> </ol> <p>This mixed implementation reflects AHBVU’s dual role in both academic training and field-based community engagement.</p>
<b>Brief description:</b>	<p>The workshop introduced elderly participants to eco-friendly marbling techniques using natural pigments such as walnut extract, turmeric and beetroot. After a short demonstration, participants explored the movement of colors on water and created their own marbled papers.</p> <p>Therapists and facilitators provided support for elderly individuals with limited mobility, tremors or vision challenges. Participants selected pigments, created patterns and transferred their designs to paper. The session ended with a group reflection on nature, colors and emotions.</p> <p>Materials included marbling trays, eco-pigments, natural brushes and thick paper suitable for elderly fine-motor use.</p>
<b>Key outcomes:</b>	<p><b>Emotional well-being:</b> Participants expressed increased calmness and relaxation. Some noted the movement of colors reminded them of rivers, seasons or childhood memories.</p> <p><b>Cognitive engagement:</b> The flowing patterns stimulated attention, sensory focus and memory recall.</p> <p><b>Environmental awareness:</b> Participants showed improved understanding of natural pigments and sustainable practices. Some expressed interest in using natural materials at home.</p> <p><b>Social connection:</b> Group interaction improved participants’ sense of belonging and reduced feelings of isolation.</p> <p><b>Creativity:</b> Participants felt empowered by producing unique artworks, boosting self-confidence.</p>
<b>Success factors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of natural pigments created a safe, sensory-rich environment.</li> <li>• Clear demonstration of each step helped participants feel confident.</li> <li>• Slow pacing and break periods supported elderly participants' energy levels.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitators provided adaptive tools (large droppers, thick brushes) for limited hand strength.</li> <li>• The reflective dialogue encouraged emotional expression and environmental appreciation.</li> <li>• Collaboration between AHBVU students and elderly participants supported intergenerational learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges and Lessons Learned (optional):</b>	<p>Some participants struggled with the fluidity of marbling; providing repeated demonstrations improved comfort.</p> <p>Rural settings sometimes lacked ideal water conditions; facilitators carried prepared trays when necessary.</p> <p>Natural pigment intensity varied; additional mixing time or sunlight exposure improved color vibrancy.</p> <p>Participants with dementia required simplified steps and gentle repetition.</p>
<b>Web link (if available)</b>	<i>Resource:</i> <a href="https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/turkish-art-of-marbling-eburu-00644">https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/turkish-art-of-marbling-eburu-00644</a>

## 7. Implementation Materials and Handouts

### Purpose of the Material:

The materials are designed to guide elderly participants through the Eco-Marbling activity in a simple, accessible and engaging way. They help participants understand each step, provide visual cues, support those with cognitive or motor limitations and reinforce environmental awareness through eco-friendly artistic practices.

The handouts also assist facilitators during training and ensure consistent delivery of the activity across different settings (faculty multi-purpose hall or rural community center).

### Type of Material:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Handout | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worksheet        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reflection Sheet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poster             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instruction Card | <input type="checkbox"/> Handout                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....         |  |  |

### Description and Use:

#### Before the Activity:

- The **Instruction Card** introduces the purpose of Eco-Marbling, explains natural pigments and gives simple visuals of each step.

- The facilitator shows the tools (tray, pigments, brushes) and presents eco-friendly materials.

### **During the Activity:**

- The **Worksheet** includes step-by-step numbered instructions (with icons):
  1. Choose your colors
  2. Drop pigments into the tray
  3. Observe the color movement
  4. Create patterns with a comb
  5. Transfer the artwork to paper
- The worksheet also includes safety symbols (e.g., “Use slowly”, “Ask for help”).
- Designed for elderly participants with larger font size and high-contrast visuals.

### **After the Activity:**

- The **Reflection Sheet** contains 3–4 short questions to support emotional expression and environmental learning:
  - *“Which color reminded you of nature the most?”*
  - *“How did creating your marbling artwork make you feel?”*
  - *“What did you learn about natural pigments?”*
  - *“Would you like to try this again with your family or friends?”*
- Facilitators can collect these sheets for monitoring and reporting.

### **Template / File:**

A suggested layout for the materials includes:

- A4 size, large-print (14–16 pt) text
- Eco-themed icons (leaf, water drop, brush)
- Step-by-step visuals
- High-contrast colors for visibility
- Space for the participant’s name, date and facilitator signature

### **Guidance for Facilitators:**

- Present materials slowly, ensuring every participant understands each step before continuing.
- Use simple, positive language to reduce anxiety.
- Encourage participants to point or gesture if verbal communication is difficult.
- Provide the reflection sheet immediately after the creative process to support emotional processing.
- In rural settings, explain how pigments were prepared to reinforce environmental learning.
- Adapt instructions for individuals with cognitive decline by using repeated, short phrases and demonstrating each step visually.
- Keep all instructional materials within clear reach and ensure tables are stable and clutter-free.

### **For Seniors with Visual Impairments:**

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- Use **high-contrast natural pigments** (e.g., turmeric yellow, beetroot red) to enhance visibility on the water surface.
- Provide **verbal guidance** and tactile tools (e.g., textured combs, thick-handled brushes).
- Use **larger trays and paper sizes** to accommodate hand-eye coordination challenges and ensure a comfortable working space.
- Encourage **partner or caregiver involvement** for guided assistance.

#### **For Participants with Cognitive Challenges:**

- Break down the marbling activity into **step-by-step, easy-to-follow instructions** with visual cues or icons.
- Offer **repetition and hands-on demonstrations** during each stage.
- Use **simplified pattern creation** techniques (e.g., free-flow drops instead of combing).
- Incorporate **reflection prompts** using simple emotion cards or guided questions to help process the experience.

#### **For Culturally Diverse Groups:**

- Begin the session by highlighting the **cultural heritage of marbling (Ebru)** as a shared expression across many traditions (e.g., Ottoman, Central Asian, Indian).
- Encourage participants to **use symbols, colors, or patterns from their own culture** in the designs.
- Provide **multilingual reflection sheets** or **translated facilitation support** when necessary.
- Use the activity to foster **intercultural dialogue and exchange**, connecting ecological themes to local beliefs and stories.



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**ERA Project**

**WP3 Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit**

**MC MEDICAL LOT**

# **Stone/Diamond patterned tapestries and/or mosaics**

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## 1. Basic Information

<b>Title of the Tool:</b>	Stone/Diamond patterned tapestries and/or mosaics
<b>Required Setting:</b> <i>(Tick or describe where it takes place — e.g., garden, classroom, community space, online, offline, etc.)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indoor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outdoor <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid The activity could be implemented both indoor and outdoor, depending on the facilitator and participants preferences and the weather conditions.

## 2. Connection to Environmental education and Eco-Art Therapy Principles:

*(Describe how the tool integrates environmental education and creative expression — e.g., using natural materials, connecting emotions to environmental elements, fostering care for the planet through artistic practice.)*

This tool integrates environmental education and creative expression by encouraging participants to work with natural or recycled materials such as stones, ceramic fragments, and eco-friendly fabrics. Through the process of designing stone and diamond patterned tapestries or mosaics, learners explore the cultural and ecological significance of these materials, fostering an appreciation for sustainable practices.

The activity connects emotions to environmental elements by inviting participants to reflect on the textures, colors, and origins of the materials they use, promoting mindfulness and sensory engagement. By creating art inspired by local traditions, participants experience a sense of continuity between human creativity and nature’s patterns, reinforcing the principle of care for the planet through artistic practice. This approach not only nurtures creativity but also cultivates environmental responsibility and emotional well-being.

## 3. Facilitator Guidance

Phase	Description
<b>Facilitator’s Role:</b>	<p><i>Explain the expected approach — e.g., guiding gently, encouraging expression, avoiding evaluation of artistic “quality.”</i></p> <p>The facilitator should adopt a supportive and non-judgmental approach, focusing on creating a safe and encouraging environment for participants. Key principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide gently: Offer clear instructions and demonstrations without imposing rigid expectations. Allow participants to explore at their own pace.</li> <li>• Encourage expression: Emphasize creativity and personal interpretation rather than technical perfection. Celebrate individuality in design choices.</li> <li>• Avoid evaluation of artistic “quality”: Refrain from comparing works or labeling them as “good” or “bad.” Instead, highlight effort, engagement, and the emotional connection participants express through their creations.</li> </ul>

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Phase	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote dialogue: Invite participants to share thoughts about their patterns, colors, and feelings during the process, fostering reflection and connection.</li> <li>• Ensure accessibility: Adapt tools and materials for seniors with cognitive or visual limitations (e.g., large-print templates, tactile samples).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tips for Implementation:</b></p>	<p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure psychological safety and emotional support.</i></li> <li>• <i>Respect each participant’s pace and comfort with art materials.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be sensitive to mobility, health, or sensory limitations of elderly participants.</i></li> <li>• <i>Connect discussions with personal memories and environmental care.</i></li> <li>• <i>Offer creative prompts.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Ensure psychological safety and emotional support:</b> Begin by creating a welcoming atmosphere. Reassure participants that the activity is about expression, not perfection.</p> <p><b>Respect each participant’s pace and comfort with art materials:</b> Allow extra time for those who need it and offer alternative tools (e.g., larger brushes, pre-cut tiles).</p> <p><b>Be sensitive to mobility, health, or sensory limitations of elderly participants:</b> Provide seating options, good lighting, and tactile materials for those with visual challenges.</p> <p><b>Connect discussions with personal memories and environmental care:</b> Encourage participants to share stories related to nature, cultural heritage, or past experiences with crafts.</p> <p><b>Offer creative prompts:</b> Examples include “Design a pattern inspired by a garden path” or “Create a mosaic using colors that remind you of the sea.”</p>
<p><b>Adaptations:</b></p>	<p><i>Suggestions for adjusting the activity for different abilities, weather conditions, or materials.</i></p> <p>To ensure inclusivity and flexibility, consider the following adjustments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>For different abilities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provide <b>pre-drawn templates</b> for participants who struggle with freehand design.</li> <li>○ Use <b>larger tiles or thicker yarn</b> for easier handling.</li> <li>○ Offer <b>color-coded guides</b> for those with cognitive challenges.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>For weather conditions:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If working outdoors, prepare <b>portable boards or trays</b> to keep materials stable.</li> <li>○ In case of rain or heat, move the activity indoors and use <b>lightweight, easy-to-clean surfaces</b>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>For material availability:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Substitute natural stones with <b>recycled ceramic pieces or eco-friendly craft foam</b>.</li> <li>○ If yarn or fabric is limited, use <b>paper strips or biodegradable alternatives</b>.</li> <li>○ Encourage <b>upcycling household items</b> (e.g., old tiles, broken dishes) to reinforce sustainability.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 4. Measure Impact and Effectiveness:

### Pre-and post-intervention assessments:

*Please suggest questions for administering surveys before and after engaging with the Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit to measure changes in environmental attitudes, well-being indicators, and engagement with nature including:*

- *participants' understanding of environmental concepts, artistic techniques, and sustainable behaviours before and after using the toolkit.*
- *recycling rates and energy consumption.*

### Pre- -intervention assessment

#### Environmental Attitudes & Engagement

- How often do you think about the impact of your daily actions on the environment?
- How connected do you feel to nature in your daily life?

#### Understanding of Environmental Concepts

- How familiar are you with the concept of sustainability?
- How much do you know about using recycled or natural materials in art?

#### Artistic Techniques & Creative Confidence

- How confident are you in your ability to create a patterned design?

#### Behavioral Indicators

- How often do you recycle household materials?
- How mindful are you about energy consumption at home?

#### Well-Being

- How often do you feel calm and relaxed during your daily routine?
- How easy is it for you to concentrate on a single task?
- How frequently do you engage in activities that help you reduce stress?
- How connected do you feel to your emotions and inner thoughts?

### Post-intervention assessment

#### Environmental Attitudes & Engagement

- How motivated do you feel to adopt eco-friendly habits after participating in this activity?
- Did this activity increase your sense of connection to natural elements?

#### Understanding of Environmental Concepts

- Can you name one sustainable practice you learned during the activity?
- How confident are you in creating art using eco-friendly materials?

#### Artistic Techniques & Creative Confidence

- How confident do you feel about applying mosaic or tapestry techniques?

#### Behavioral Indicators

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- Has your recycling frequency changed since the activity?
- Did this experience influence your energy-saving habits?

#### Well-Being

- Did this activity help you feel more relaxed or calm?
- Did you find it easier to focus while creating your artwork?
- Did participating in this activity reduce your stress or tension?
- Did the creative process help you feel more in touch with your emotions?

### 5. Environmental and Sustainability Dimension

<p><b>Eco-aspect:</b></p>	<p><i>Describe how the tool promotes environmental awareness or sustainable behavior — e.g., reusing materials, connecting with local ecology, promoting respect for natural cycles.</i></p> <p>This tool promotes environmental awareness and sustainable behavior by integrating eco-friendly practices into the creative process. Participants are encouraged to:</p> <p>Reuse and repurpose materials: Utilize natural stones, recycled ceramics, and leftover fabrics to reduce waste and highlight the value of upcycling.</p> <p>Connect with local ecology: Incorporate patterns and colors inspired by regional landscapes, fostering appreciation for local biodiversity.</p> <p>Respect natural cycles: Discuss how traditional art forms reflect harmony with nature and encourage mindful resource use.</p> <p>Adopt sustainable habits: Through hands-on experience, participants learn that creativity can thrive without excessive consumption, reinforcing the principle of “make art, not waste.”</p> <p>This approach transforms artistic expression into an opportunity for environmental education, helping participants internalize sustainable behaviors while engaging in meaningful, culturally inspired art.</p>
<p><b>Community Impact:</b></p>	<p><i>Note how it might benefit the community — exhibitions, group clean-ups, storytelling events, etc.</i></p> <p>This activity can extend beyond individual well-being to create meaningful benefits for the community:</p> <p>Exhibitions: Display participants’ mosaics and tapestries in local cultural centers, libraries, or community halls to celebrate creativity and environmental awareness.</p> <p>Group Clean-Ups: Organize events where participants collect natural or recyclable materials for future art projects, reinforcing sustainability and teamwork.</p> <p>Storytelling Events: Host sessions where participants share personal memories connected to nature and cultural heritage, fostering intergenerational dialogue.</p>

	<p>Collaborative Installations: Create a large community mosaic using contributions from all participants, symbolizing unity and shared responsibility for the environment.</p> <p>Workshops for Families: Invite relatives and neighbors to join, spreading eco-art principles and strengthening social bonds.</p>
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## 6. Case studies and best practices

<b>Title of the Case Study or Best practice</b>	<p><i>Give a short, descriptive title</i></p> <p><b>SEEDS Project – Eco-Art for Education and Well-Being</b></p>
<b>Location / Context:</b>	<p><i>Where and with whom was it implemented? Rural community, elderly centre, environmental NGO, etc.</i></p> <p>Implemented in Cyprus and Spain, primarily in pre-primary and primary school settings, involving teachers, students, and local communities.</p>
<b>Brief description:</b>	<p><i>Summarize what was done, who participated, and what materials or methods were used</i></p> <p>The SEEDS Project, co-funded by the European Union Erasmus+ Programme, trained educators to integrate eco-art and eco-psychology principles into classroom activities. Teachers guided students in creating art using natural and recycled materials, combining environmental education with creative expression. Activities included nature-inspired mosaics, collaborative installations, and storytelling sessions about sustainability.</p>
<b>Key outcomes:</b>	<p><i>Describe the observed emotional, social, or environmental impacts — what changed for participants, the community, or the environment?</i></p> <p>Emotional Impact: Improved mental health and resilience among students and teachers through creative, nature-based activities.</p> <p>Social Impact: Strengthened teacher-student relationships and community engagement via collaborative art projects.</p> <p>Environmental Impact: Increased awareness of sustainability and adoption of eco-friendly behaviors in schools and families.</p>
<b>Success factors:</b>	<p><i>What made this activity effective? Consider facilitation style, use of natural materials, participant engagement, community support, etc.</i></p> <p><b>Facilitation Style:</b> Supportive, non-judgmental guidance encouraging creativity and personal expression.</p> <p><b>Use of Natural Materials:</b> Hands-on engagement with recycled and organic resources reinforced environmental principles.</p> <p><b>Community Support:</b> Collaboration between schools, families, and local organizations amplified impact and sustainability.</p>
<b>Challenges and Lessons Learned (optional):</b>	<p><i>Mention difficulties or barriers faced, and how they were overcome</i></p> <p>One of the main challenges faced by the SEEDS Project was the limited availability of natural materials in urban school environments. Teachers initially struggled to find eco-friendly resources for art activities without</p>

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	<p>resorting to conventional craft supplies. To overcome this, the project team encouraged creative upcycling, asking families and local businesses to donate recyclable items such as old tiles, fabric scraps, and packaging materials. This not only solved the material shortage but also deepened community involvement and reinforced the sustainability message.</p> <p>Another lesson learned was the importance of flexibility in activity design. Some schools had restricted outdoor spaces, making nature-based sessions difficult. Facilitators adapted by bringing natural elements indoors—such as potted plants and stones—and using digital storytelling to maintain the connection with ecology. These adjustments ensured inclusivity and demonstrated that eco-art principles can thrive even in resource-limited settings.</p>
<b>Web link (if available)</b>	<a href="https://seeds-education.eu/">https://seeds-education.eu/</a>

## 7. Implementation Materials and Handouts

### **Purpose of the Material:**

*Describe the purpose of this material — e.g., a worksheet for reflection, a handout explaining steps, or a visual prompt for group discussion.*

Reflection sheet with prompts.

The purpose of the reflection prompts is to:

#### **Foster Emotional and Sensory Engagement**

It encourages participants—especially seniors—to connect emotionally with the materials they use. By reflecting on textures, colors, and patterns, they engage their senses and memories, which supports cognitive stimulation and emotional well-being.

#### **Deepen Artistic Expression**

The prompts guide learners to think beyond technique and aesthetics, helping them explore the meaning behind their creations. This nurtures personal storytelling and cultural connection through art.

#### **Reinforce Environmental Awareness**

By linking natural and recycled materials to personal reflection, the prompts help participants internalize the value of sustainability. They begin to see their creative choices as part of a broader ecological narrative.

#### **Support Inclusive Learning**

The questions are designed to be accessible, especially for older adults or those with cognitive or visual limitations. They promote gentle introspection and conversation, making the activity more inclusive and enriching.

### **Type of Material:**

Handout

Worksheet

Reflection Sheet

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- Poster                                       Instruction Card                                       Handout  
 Other.....

**Description and Use:**

*Explain briefly how and when the material should be used during the session — before, during, or after the activity.*

This reflection prompts material is designed to be used during and after the Stone/Diamond patterned tapestries and/or mosaics activity. During the creative process, prompts can guide participants to engage with the textures, colors, and patterns they are working with. After the activity, the prompts support reflection, discussion, and storytelling, helping participants connect their artwork to personal memories, emotions, and environmental themes.

**Template / File:**

*Insert template or link*

**Visual Reflection Prompts**

- Which pattern reminds you of something from your childhood?
- How do the colors and shapes make you feel?
- Can you find a pattern that looks like something in nature?
- What emotions do the visual elements of your artwork evoke?
- Do any of the designs remind you of cultural or traditional motifs?

**Tactile/Memory Prompts**

- Touch the texture—does it feel familiar?
- Have you ever seen a wall or floor like this?
- If you could design your own mosaic, what would it look like?
- What memories do the materials bring to mind?
- How does the texture influence your emotional response to the artwork?

**Guidance for Facilitators:**

*Notes on how to present or adapt the material for different participant needs or contexts.*

This activity is designed to be flexible and inclusive, especially for older adults or individuals with cognitive or sensory limitations. Facilitators can adapt the session based on participants’ needs, cultural backgrounds, and available materials.

**For seniors with visual impairments:**

- Use high-contrast materials and bold outlines in templates.
- Offer tactile samples (e.g. textured stones, fabrics) for exploration.
- Encourage verbal descriptions and storytelling.

**For participants with cognitive challenges:**

Break instructions into small, manageable steps.

Use visual aids and physical demonstrations.

Allow extra time and offer gentle guidance.

**For culturally diverse groups:**

Invite participants to share traditional patterns or motifs from their heritage.

Include examples from Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, or local traditions.

Encourage storytelling around materials and designs.



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## **ERA Project**

### **WP3 Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit**

**SPH IVAN RILSIKI**

# **Creating Decorative Flowers, Ornaments, and Figurines from Raw Wool**

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## 1. Basic Information

<b>Title of the Tool:</b>	<b><i>Creating Decorative Flowers, Ornaments, and Figurines from Raw Wool</i></b>
<b>Required Setting:</b> <i>(Tick or describe where it takes place — e.g., garden, classroom, community space, online, offline, etc.)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indoor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outdoor <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid  The activity could be implemented both indoor and outdoor depending of the preferences of facilitators and participants and the weather conditions.

## 2. Connection to Environmental education and Eco-Art Therapy Principles:

*(Describe how the tool integrates environmental education and creative expression — e.g., using natural materials, connecting emotions to environmental elements, fostering care for the planet through artistic practice.)*

This tool integrates environmental education and creative expression by encouraging participants to work with natural or recycled materials such as wool fabrics, as well recycled wool fabrics: reusing and recycling wool cloth and other objects is in line with the newest programs of the European commission of reducing the textile litter and is consider eco-friendly practice. Through the process of designing of woolen fabric and its patterns, learners explore the cultural and ecological significance of these materials, fostering an appreciation for sustainable practices. As well as rediscovering old art of preparation of woolen projects that were crafted by their ancestors.

The activity connects emotions to environmental elements by inviting participants to reflect on the textures, colors, and origins of the materials they use, promoting mindfulness and sensory engagement. By creating art inspired by local traditions, participants experience a sense of continuity between human creativity and nature’s patterns, reinforcing the principle of care for the planet through artistic practice. This approach not only nurtures creativity but also cultivates environmental responsibility and emotional well-being.

## 3. Facilitator Guidance

Phase	Description
<b>Facilitator’s Role:</b>	<p><i>Explain the expected approach — e.g., guiding gently, encouraging expression, avoiding evaluation of artistic “quality.”</i></p> <p>The facilitator should adopt a supportive and non-judgmental approach, focusing on creating a safe and encouraging environment for participants.</p> <p>Key principles include:</p>

Phase	Description
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Guide gently: Offer clear instructions and demonstrations without imposing rigid expectations. Allow participants to explore at their own pace.</li> <li>2. Encourage expression: Emphasize creativity and personal interpretation rather than technical perfection. Celebrate individuality in design choices.</li> <li>3. Avoid evaluation of artistic “quality”: Refrain from comparing works or labeling them as “good” or “bad.” Instead, highlight effort, engagement, and the emotional connection participants express through their creations.</li> <li>4. Promote dialogue: Invite participants to share thoughts about their patterns, colors, and feelings during the process, fostering reflection and connection.</li> <li>5. Ensure accessibility: Adapt tools and materials for seniors with cognitive or visual limitations (e.g., large-print templates, tactile samples).</li> </ol>
<p><b>Tips for Implementation:</b></p>	<p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure psychological safety and emotional support.</i></li> <li>• <i>Respect each participant’s pace and comfort with art materials.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be sensitive to mobility, health, or sensory limitations of elderly participants.</i></li> <li>• <i>Connect discussions with personal memories and environmental care.</i></li> <li>• <i>Offer creative prompts.</i></li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure psychological safety and emotional support: Begin by creating a welcoming atmosphere. Reassure participants that the activity is about expression, not perfection.</li> <li>2. Respect each participant’s pace and comfort with art materials: Allow extra time for those who need it and offer alternative tools (e.g., larger brushes, pre-cut tiles).</li> <li>3. Be sensitive to mobility, health, or sensory limitations of elderly participants: Provide seating options, good lighting, and tactile materials for those with visual challenges.</li> <li>4. Connect discussions with personal memories and environmental care: Encourage participants to share stories related to nature, cultural heritage, or past experiences with crafts.</li> <li>5. Offer creative prompts: Examples include “Design a pattern inspired by nature” or “Create a woolen fabric in rustic style”</li> </ol>
<p><b>Adaptations:</b></p>	<p><i>Suggestions for adjusting the activity for different abilities, weather conditions, or materials.</i></p> <p>To ensure inclusivity and flexibility, consider the following adjustments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For different abilities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. Provide pre-drawn/simple templates for beginners and participants who struggle with freehand design.</li> <li>1.2. Use larger tiles or schematics for easier handling.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Phase	Description
	<p>1.3. Offer color-coded guides for those with cognitive challenges.</p> <p>2. For weather conditions:</p> <p>2.1 If working outdoors, prepare portable boards or trays to keep materials stable.</p> <p>2.2 In case of rain or heat, move the activity indoors and use lightweight, easy-to-clean surfaces.</p> <p>3. For material availability:</p> <p>3.1. Providing raw or dyed wool, or recycled wool fabrics in different colors, including (recycled or reused beads, buttons, thread) as eco-friendly materials.</p> <p>3.2 Encourage recycling woolen cloth items (e.g., old sweater, woolen socks and hand gloves, woolen indoor boots – tarlatsi, etc.) to reinforce sustainability.</p>

#### 4. Measure Impact and Effectiveness:

##### Pre-and post-intervention assessments:

*Please suggest questions for administering surveys before and after engaging with the Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit to measure changes in environmental attitudes, well-being indicators, and engagement with nature including:*

- *participants' understanding of environmental concepts, artistic techniques, and sustainable behaviours before and after using the toolkit.*
- *recycling rates and energy consumption.*

##### I. Pre - intervention assessment

###### 1. Environmental Attitudes & Engagement

- 1.1. How often do you think about the impact of your daily actions on the environment?
- 1.2. How connected do you feel to nature in your daily life?
- 1.3. How the environment impacts your day-to-day activities?

###### 2. Understanding of Environmental Concepts

- 2.1. How familiar are you with the concept of Environmental sustainability?
- 2.2. How much do you know about using recycled or natural materials in art or artistic performances?

###### 3. Artistic Techniques & Creative Confidence

- 3.1. How confident are you in your ability to create a patterned design or replicate an old design?

###### 4. Behavioral Indicators

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- 4.1. How often do you recycle household materials?
- 4.2. How mindful are you about energy consumption at home?
- 4.3. How often do you separate your household litter?

5. Well-Being

- 5.1. How often do you feel calm and relaxed during your daily routine?
- 5.2. How easy is it for you to concentrate on a single task?
- 5.3. How frequently do you engage in activities that help you reduce stress?
- 5.4. How connected do you feel to your emotions and inner thoughts?

II. Post-intervention assessment

1. Environmental Attitudes & Engagement

- 1.1. How motivated do you feel to adopt eco-friendly habits after participating in this activity?
- 1.2. Did this activity increase your sense of connection to natural fabrics and materials?

2. Understanding of Environmental Concepts

- 2.1. Can you name one sustainable practice you learned during the activity?
- 2.2. How confident are you in creating art using eco-friendly materials?

3. Artistic Techniques & Creative Confidence

- 3.1. How confident do you feel about preparing woolen designs?

4. Behavioral Indicators

- 4.1. Has your recycling frequency changed since the activity?
- 4.2. How did you feel while you were creating?

5. Well-Being

- 5.1. Did this activity help you feel more relaxed or calm?
- 5.2. Did you find it easier to focus while creating your artwork?
- 5.3. Did participating in this activity reduce your stress or tension?
- 5.4. Did the creative process help you feel more in touch with your emotions?

**5. Environmental and Sustainability Dimension**

<b>Eco-aspect:</b>	<p>Describe how the tool promotes environmental awareness or sustainable behavior — e.g., reusing materials, connecting with local ecology, promoting respect for natural cycles.</p> <p>This tool promotes environmental awareness and encourage the sustainable behavior and perceptions of the participants by integrating eco-friendly practices into the creative process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reuse and repurpose materials: Utilize raw or dyed wool (natural ingredients), recycled woolen cloths, and leftover woolen fabrics to reduce waste.</li> </ul>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Connect with local environment and cultural landscape: Incorporate patterns and colors inspired by regional landscapes, fostering appreciation for local art traditions and local textile motifs.</li> <li>3. Respect natural cycles: Discuss how traditional art forms reflect harmony with nature and encourage mindful resource use.</li> <li>4. Adopt sustainable habits: Through hands-on experience, participants learn that creativity can thrive without excessive consumption, reinforcing the principle of “make art, not waste.”</li> </ol> <p>This approach transforms artistic expression into an opportunity for environmental education, helping participants internalize sustainable behaviors while engaging in meaningful, culturally inspired art.</p>
<p><b>Community Impact:</b></p>	<p><i>Note how it might benefit the community — exhibitions, group clean-ups, storytelling events, etc.</i></p> <p>This activity extends beyond individual well-being to create meaningful benefits for the community:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exhibitions: Display participants’ woolen fabrics and prepared materials in local community centers, to celebrate creativity and environmental awareness and to encourage the community to be active participants in such activities.</li> <li>2. Reuse and recycle of woolen couture: encourage the community to gather unnecessary woolen products for future art projects, reinforcing recycling and reuse to promote sustainability in the textile field.</li> <li>3. Storytelling Events: Host sessions where participants share personal memories and community leaders and other members to present specific and traditional patterns as integrational part of local cultural heritage, thus fostering intergenerational dialogue.</li> <li>4. Future events: proposing small scale meeting and workshops for the community members from all generations, incl. relatives from distant and culturally diverse societies and thus fostering the social cohesion.</li> </ol>

## 6. Case studies and best practices

<p><b>Title of the Case Study or Best practice</b></p>	<p><i>Give a short, descriptive title</i>  <b>SEEDS Project – Eco-Art for Education and Well-Being</b></p>
<p><b>Location / Context:</b></p>	<p><i>Where and with whom was it implemented? Rural community, elderly centre, environmental NGO, etc.</i></p>

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	Implemented in Cyprus and Spain, primarily in pre-primary and primary school settings, involving teachers, students, and local communities.
<b>Brief description:</b>	<p><i>Summarize what was done, who participated, and what materials or methods were used</i></p> <p>The SEEDS Project, co-funded by the European Union Erasmus+ Programme, trained educators to integrate eco-art and eco-psychology principles into classroom activities. Teachers guided students in creating art using natural and recycled materials, combining environmental education with creative expression. Activities included nature-inspired mosaics, collaborative installations, and storytelling sessions about sustainability.</p>
<b>Key outcomes:</b>	<p><i>Describe the observed emotional, social, or environmental impacts — what changed for participants, the community, or the environment?</i></p> <p>Emotional Impact: Improved mental health and resilience among students and teachers through creative, nature-based activities.</p> <p>Social Impact: Strengthened teacher-student relationships and community engagement via collaborative art projects.</p> <p>Environmental Impact: Increased awareness of sustainability and adoption of eco-friendly behaviors in schools and families.</p>
<b>Success factors:</b>	<p><i>What made this activity effective? Consider facilitation style, use of natural materials, participant engagement, community support, etc.</i></p> <p>Facilitation Style: Supportive, non-judgmental guidance encouraging creativity and personal expression.</p> <p>Use of Natural Materials: Hands-on engagement with recycled and organic resources reinforced environmental principles.</p> <p>Community Support: Collaboration between schools, families, and local organizations amplified impact and sustainability.</p>
<b>Challenges and Lessons Learned (optional):</b>	<p><i>Mention difficulties or barriers faced, and how they were overcome</i></p> <p>One of the main challenges faced by the SEEDS Project was the limited availability of natural materials in urban school environments. Teachers initially struggled to find eco-friendly resources for art activities without resorting to conventional craft supplies. To overcome this, the project team encouraged creative upcycling, asking families and local businesses to donate recyclable items such as old tiles, fabric scraps, and packaging materials. This not only solved the material shortage but also deepened community involvement and reinforced the sustainability message.</p> <p>Another lesson learned was the importance of flexibility in activity design. Some schools had restricted outdoor spaces, making nature-based sessions difficult. Facilitators adapted by bringing natural elements indoors—such as potted plants and stones—and using digital storytelling to maintain the connection with ecology. These adjustments ensured inclusivity and demonstrated that eco-art principles can thrive even in resource-limited settings.</p>

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Web link (if available)	<a href="https://seeds-education.eu/">https://seeds-education.eu/</a>
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## 7. Implementation Materials and Handouts

### Purpose of the Material:

*Describe the purpose of this material — e.g., a worksheet for reflection, a handout explaining steps, or a visual prompt for group discussion.*

The purpose of the reflection prompts is to:

#### 1. Foster Emotional and Sensory Engagement

It encourages participants—especially seniors—to connect emotionally with the materials they use. By reflecting on textures, colors, and patterns, they engage their senses and memories, which supports cognitive stimulation and emotional well-being.

#### 2. Deepen Artistic Expression

The prompts guide learners to think beyond technique and aesthetics, helping them explore the meaning behind their creations. This nurtures personal storytelling and cultural connection through art.

#### 3. Reinforce Environmental Awareness

By linking natural and recycled materials to personal reflection, the prompts help participants internalize the value of sustainability. They begin to see their creative choices as part of a broader ecological narrative.

#### 4. Support Inclusive Learning

The questions are designed to be accessible, especially for older adults or those with cognitive or visual limitations. They promote gentle introspection and conversation, making the activity more inclusive and enriching.

### Type of Material:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Handout | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worksheet | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reflection Sheet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poster             | <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction Card     | <input type="checkbox"/> Handout                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....         |   |  |

### Description and Use:

*Explain briefly how and when the material should be used during the session — before, during, or after the activity.*

This tool introduces participants to the fundamentals of art therapy through working with raw wool. The focus is on creating simple decorative items (flowers, brooches, figurines) that develop fine motor skills, stimulate imagination, and provide the pleasure of creating a finished creative product with aesthetic value.

**Template / File:**

*Insert template or link*

- Present the finished items and make open discussion.
- Share emotions: "How did you feel while you were creating?"
- Discuss possible applications – as a gift, room decoration, or a collective panel/bouquet.
- Would you like to try a more complex design in the future?
- "What did you like the most?"
- "What would you like to try next time?"
- The facilitator notes their observations on the concentration, fine motor skills, mood, and social inclusion of each participant.

**Guidance for Facilitators:**

*Notes on how to present or adapt the material for different participant needs or contexts.*

- Keep design simple for beginners
- prepare extra kits for those who work faster
- Encourage group conversation to build a sense of community
- Encourage, don't correct strictly – there are no "mistakes."
- Provide simple, step-by-step instructions.
- Allow time for breaks if the work requires effort.
- Maintain a positive and calm atmosphere with music.

**ADAPTING THE ACTIVITY FOR PEOPLE WITH VARIOUS DISABILITIES**

- Visual impairments: Use high-contrast colors and larger details.
- Motor difficulties: An assistant can help with rolling or poking.
- Cognitive difficulties: Simplify the task – instead of a flower, just a single ball or a flat shape.
- Sensory sensitivity: Allow participants to work with gloves or choose softer wool.



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**ERA Project**

**WP3 Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit**

**SPH IVAN RILSKI**

# **Creativity, Tradition and Relaxation through Hand Embroidery**

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## 1. Basic Information

<b>Title of the Tool:</b>	<b><i>Creativity, Tradition and Relaxation through Hand Embroidery</i></b>
<b>Required Setting:</b> <i>(Tick or describe where it takes place — e.g., garden, classroom, community space, online, offline, etc.)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indoor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outdoor <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid  The activity could be implemented both indoor and outdoor depending of the preferences of facilitators and participants and the weather conditions.

## 2. Connection to Environmental education and Eco-Art Therapy Principles:

*(Describe how the tool integrates environmental education and creative expression — e.g., using natural materials, connecting emotions to environmental elements, fostering care for the planet through artistic practice.)*

This tool integrates environmental education and creative expression by encouraging participants to work with natural or recycled materials such natural fabrics and threads, as well recycled fabrics: reusing and recycling cloth and other objects is in line with the newest programs of the European commission of reducing the textile litter and is consider eco-friendly practice. Through the process of designing of embroidery and its patterns, learners explore the cultural and ecological significance of these materials, fostering an appreciation for sustainable practices. As well as rediscovering old art of preparation of woolen projects that were crafted by their ancestors.

The activity connects emotions to environmental elements by inviting participants to reflect on the textures, colors, and origins of the materials they use, promoting mindfulness and sensory engagement. By creating art inspired by local traditions, participants experience a sense of continuity between human creativity and nature’s patterns, reinforcing the principle of care for the planet through artistic practice. This approach not only nurtures creativity but also cultivates environmental responsibility and emotional well-being.

## 3. Facilitator Guidance

Phase	Description
<b>Facilitator’s Role:</b>	<p><i>Explain the expected approach — e.g., guiding gently, encouraging expression, avoiding evaluation of artistic “quality.”</i></p> <p>The facilitator should adopt a supportive and non-judgmental approach, focusing on creating a safe and encouraging environment for participants.</p> <p>Key principles include:</p>

Phase	Description
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Guide gently: Offer clear instructions and demonstrations without imposing rigid expectations. Allow participants to explore at their own pace.</li> <li>7. Encourage expression: Emphasize creativity and personal interpretation rather than technical perfection. Celebrate individuality in design choices.</li> <li>8. Avoid evaluation of artistic “quality”: Refrain from comparing works or labeling them as “good” or “bad.” Instead, highlight effort, engagement, and the emotional connection participants express through their creations.</li> <li>9. Promote dialogue: Invite participants to share thoughts about their patterns, colors, and feelings during the process, fostering reflection and connection.</li> <li>10. Ensure accessibility: Adapt tools and materials for seniors with cognitive or visual limitations (e.g., Aida cloth, linen, or canvas with large holes, simple embroidery patterns with recognizable flowers, stars, crosses, triangles)</li> </ol>
<b>Tips for Implementation:</b>	<p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ensure psychological safety and emotional support.</i></li> <li>• <i>Respect each participant’s pace and comfort with art materials.</i></li> <li>• <i>Be sensitive to mobility, health, or sensory limitations of elderly participants.</i></li> <li>• <i>Connect discussions with personal memories and environmental care.</i></li> <li>• <i>Offer creative prompts.</i></li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Ensure psychological safety and emotional support: Begin by creating a welcoming atmosphere. Reassure participants that the activity is about expression, not perfection.</li> <li>7. Respect each participant’s pace and comfort with art materials: Allow extra time for those who need it and offer alternative tools (e.g., Aida cloth, linen, or canvas with large holes, blunt-tipped tapestry needles with large eyes, embroidery hoops with large eyes).</li> <li>8. Be sensitive to mobility, health, or sensory limitations of elderly participants: Provide seating options, good lighting, and tactile materials for those with visual challenges.</li> <li>9. Connect discussions with personal memories and environmental care: Encourage participants to share stories related to nature, cultural heritage, or past experiences with crafts.</li> <li>10. Offer creative prompts: Examples include “Design a pattern inspired by nature” or “Create a local embroidery in rustic style”</li> </ol>
<b>Adaptations:</b>	<p><i>Suggestions for adjusting the activity for different abilities, weather conditions, or materials.</i></p> <p>To ensure inclusivity and flexibility, consider the following adjustments:</p>

Phase	Description
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For different abilities:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1. Provide pre-drawn/simple templates for beginners and participants who struggle with freehand design.</li> <li>1.2. Use larger tiles or schematics for easier handling.</li> <li>1.3. Offer color-coded guides for those with cognitive challenges.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. For weather conditions:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 If working outdoors, prepare portable boards or trays to keep materials stable.</li> <li>2.2 In case of rain or heat, move the activity indoors and use lightweight, easy-to-clean surfaces.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. For material availability:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. Providing embroidery fabric and embroidery threads in different colors, including (recycled or reused beads, buttons, thread) as eco-friendly materials.</li> <li>3.2 Encourage recycling of cloth items to reinforce sustainability.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

#### 4. Measure Impact and Effectiveness:

##### Pre-and post-intervention assessments:

*Please suggest questions for administering surveys before and after engaging with the Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit to measure changes in environmental attitudes, well-being indicators, and engagement with nature including:*

- *participants' understanding of environmental concepts, artistic techniques, and sustainable behaviours before and after using the toolkit.*
- *recycling rates and energy consumption.*

##### III. Pre - intervention assessment

##### 6. Environmental Attitudes & Engagement

- 6.1. How often do you think about the impact of your daily actions on the environment?
- 6.2. How connected do you feel to nature in your daily life?
- 6.3. How the environment impacts your day-to-day activities?

##### 7. Understanding of Environmental Concepts

- 7.1. How familiar are you with the concept of Environmental sustainability?
- 7.2. How much do you know about using recycled or natural materials in art or artistic performances?

##### 8. Artistic Techniques & Creative Confidence

- 8.1. How confident are you in your ability to create a patterned design or replicate an old design?

9. Behavioral Indicators

- 9.1. How often do you recycle household materials?
- 9.2. How mindful are you about energy consumption at home?
- 9.3. How often do you separate your household litter?

10. Well-Being

- 10.1. How often do you feel calm and relaxed during your daily routine?
- 10.2. How easy is it for you to concentrate on a single task?
- 10.3. How frequently do you engage in activities that help you reduce stress?
- 10.4. How connected do you feel to your emotions and inner thoughts?

IV. Post-intervention assessment

6. Environmental Attitudes & Engagement

- 6.1. How motivated do you feel to adopt eco-friendly habits after participating in this activity?
- 6.2. Did this activity increase your sense of connection to natural fabrics and materials?

7. Understanding of Environmental Concepts

- 7.1. Can you name one sustainable practice you learned during the activity?
- 7.2. How confident are you in creating art using eco-friendly materials?

8. Artistic Techniques & Creative Confidence

- 8.1. How confident do you feel about preparing embroidery designs?

9. Behavioral Indicators

- 9.1. Has your recycling frequency changed since the activity?
- 9.2. How did you feel while you were creating?

10. Well-Being

- 10.1. Did this activity help you feel more relaxed or calm?
- 10.2. Did you find it easier to focus while creating your artwork?
- 10.3. Did participating in this activity reduce your stress or tension?
- 10.4. Did the creative process help you feel more in touch with your emotions?

**5. Environmental and Sustainability Dimension**

<p><b>Eco-aspect:</b></p>	<p>Describe how the tool promotes environmental awareness or sustainable behavior — e.g., reusing materials, connecting with local ecology, promoting respect for natural cycles.</p> <p>This tool promotes environmental awareness and encourage the sustainable behavior and perceptions of the participants by integrating eco-friendly practices into the creative process.</p>
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Reuse and repurpose materials: Utilize embroidery (natural ingredients), recycled cloths and textile, and leftover fabrics to reduce waste.</li> <li>6. Connect with local environment and cultural landscape: Incorporate patterns and colors inspired by regional landscapes, fostering appreciation for local art traditions and local textile motifs.</li> <li>7. Respect natural cycles: Discuss how traditional art forms reflect harmony with nature and encourage mindful resource use.</li> <li>8. Adopt sustainable habits: Through hands-on experience, participants learn that creativity can thrive without excessive consumption, reinforcing the principle of “make art, not waste.”</li> </ol> <p>This approach transforms artistic expression into an opportunity for environmental education, helping participants internalize sustainable behaviors while engaging in meaningful, culturally inspired art.</p>
<p><b>Community Impact:</b></p>	<p><i>Note how it might benefit the community — exhibitions, group clean-ups, storytelling events, etc.</i></p> <p>This activity extends beyond individual well-being to create meaningful benefits for the community:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Exhibitions: Display participants’ woolen fabrics and prepared materials in local community centers, to celebrate creativity and environmental awareness and to encourage the community to be active participants in such activities.</li> <li>6. Reuse and recycle of woolen couture: encourage the community to gather unnecessary woolen products for future art projects, reinforcing recycling and reuse to promote sustainability in the textile field.</li> <li>7. Storytelling Events: Host sessions where participants share personal memories and community leaders and other members to present specific and traditional patterns as integrational part of local cultural heritage, thus fostering intergenerational dialogue.</li> <li>8. Future events: proposing small scale meeting and workshops for the community members from all generations, incl. relatives from distant and culturally diverse societies and thus fostering the social cohesion.</li> </ol>

## 6. Case studies and best practices

<p><b>Title of the Case Study or Best practice</b></p>	<p><i>Give a short, descriptive title</i>  <b>SEEDS Project – Eco-Art for Education and Well-Being</b></p>
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<b>Location / Context:</b>	<p><i>Where and with whom was it implemented? Rural community, elderly centre, environmental NGO, etc.</i></p> <p>Implemented in Cyprus and Spain, primarily in pre-primary and primary school settings, involving teachers, students, and local communities.</p>
<b>Brief description:</b>	<p><i>Summarize what was done, who participated, and what materials or methods were used</i></p> <p>The SEEDS Project, co-funded by the European Union Erasmus+ Programme, trained educators to integrate eco-art and eco-psychology principles into classroom activities. Teachers guided students in creating art using natural and recycled materials, combining environmental education with creative expression. Activities included nature-inspired mosaics, collaborative installations, and storytelling sessions about sustainability.</p>
<b>Key outcomes:</b>	<p><i>Describe the observed emotional, social, or environmental impacts — what changed for participants, the community, or the environment?</i></p> <p>Emotional Impact: Improved mental health and resilience among students and teachers through creative, nature-based activities.</p> <p>Social Impact: Strengthened teacher-student relationships and community engagement via collaborative art projects.</p> <p>Environmental Impact: Increased awareness of sustainability and adoption of eco-friendly behaviors in schools and families.</p>
<b>Success factors:</b>	<p><i>What made this activity effective? Consider facilitation style, use of natural materials, participant engagement, community support, etc.</i></p> <p>Facilitation Style: Supportive, non-judgmental guidance encouraging creativity and personal expression.</p> <p>Use of Natural Materials: Hands-on engagement with recycled and organic resources reinforced environmental principles.</p> <p>Community Support: Collaboration between schools, families, and local organizations amplified impact and sustainability.</p>
<b>Challenges and Lessons Learned (optional):</b>	<p><i>Mention difficulties or barriers faced, and how they were overcome</i></p> <p>One of the main challenges faced by the SEEDS Project was the limited availability of natural materials in urban school environments. Teachers initially struggled to find eco-friendly resources for art activities without resorting to conventional craft supplies. To overcome this, the project team encouraged creative upcycling, asking families and local businesses to donate recyclable items such as old tiles, fabric scraps, and packaging materials. This not only solved the material shortage but also deepened community involvement and reinforced the sustainability message.</p> <p>Another lesson learned was the importance of flexibility in activity design. Some schools had restricted outdoor spaces, making nature-based sessions difficult. Facilitators adapted by bringing natural elements indoors—such as potted plants and stones—and using digital storytelling to maintain the connection with ecology. These adjustments</p>

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	ensured inclusivity and demonstrated that eco-art principles can thrive even in resource-limited settings.
Web link (if available)	<a href="https://seeds-education.eu/">https://seeds-education.eu/</a>

## 7. Implementation Materials and Handouts

### Purpose of the Material:

*Describe the purpose of this material — e.g., a worksheet for reflection, a handout explaining steps, or a visual prompt for group discussion.*

The purpose of the reflection prompts is to:

#### 5. Foster Emotional and Sensory Engagement

It encourages participants—especially seniors—to connect emotionally with the materials they use. By reflecting on textures, colors, and patterns, they engage their senses and memories, which supports cognitive stimulation and emotional well-being.

#### 6. Deepen Artistic Expression

The prompts guide learners to think beyond technique and aesthetics, helping them explore the meaning behind their creations. This nurtures personal storytelling and cultural connection through art.

#### 7. Reinforce Environmental Awareness

By linking natural and recycled materials to personal reflection, the prompts help participants internalize the value of sustainability. They begin to see their creative choices as part of a broader ecological narrative.

#### 8. Support Inclusive Learning

The questions are designed to be accessible, especially for older adults or those with cognitive or visual limitations. They promote gentle introspection and conversation, making the activity more inclusive and enriching.

### Type of Material:

- Handout
  Worksheet
  Reflection Sheet  
 Poster
  Instruction Card
  Handout  
 Other.....

### Description and Use:

*Explain briefly how and when the material should be used during the session — before, during, or after the activity.*

This tool introduces participants to the fundamentals of art therapy through working with traditional embroidery. The focus is on creating simple decorative items (flowers, brooches,

figurines) that develop fine motor skills, stimulate imagination, and provide the pleasure of creating a finished creative product with aesthetic value.

**Template / File:**

*Insert template or link*

- Present the finished items and make open discussion.
- Share emotions: "How did you feel while you were creating?"
- Discuss possible applications – as a gift, room decoration, or a collective panel/bouquet.
- Would you like to try a more complex design in the future?
- "Was this activity easy for you?"
- "What did you like the most?"
- "What would you like to try next time?"
- "How did you feel while working?"

**Guidance for Facilitators:**

*Notes on how to present or adapt the material for different participant needs or contexts.*

- Keep design simple for beginners
- prepare extra kits for those who work faster
- Encourage group conversation to build a sense of community
- Encourage, don't correct strictly – there are no "mistakes."
- Provide simple, step-by-step instructions.
- Allow time for breaks if the work requires effort.
- Maintain a positive and calm atmosphere with music.

**ADAPTING THE ACTIVITY FOR PEOPLE WITH VARIOUS DISABILITIES**

- Visual impairments: Use high-contrast colors and larger details.
- Motor difficulties: An assistant can help with rolling or poking.
- Cognitive difficulties: Simplify the task – instead of a flower, just a single ball or a flat shape.
- Sensory sensitivity: Allow participants to work with gloves or choose softer wool.



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**ERA Project**

**WP3 Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit**

**ERCC**

# **Scrapbooking: Preserving Memories Through Art**

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## 1. Basic Information

<b>Title of the Tool:</b>	<b>Scrapbooking: Preserving Memories Through Art</b>		
<b>Required Setting:</b> <i>(Tick or describe where it takes place - e.g., garden, classroom, community space, online, offline, etc.)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hybrid
This activity can be performed both indoor and outdoor (depending on the weather).			

## 2. Connection to Environmental education and Eco-Art Therapy Principles:

*This module introduces participants to scrapbooking as an art therapy method that not only supports reminiscence, emotional expression, and social connection among older adults in rural communities but also integrates environmental education through creative practice.*

*By encouraging participants to use natural and locally available materials-such as dried leaves, pressed flowers, seeds, or recycled paper-the activity strengthens their connection to the surrounding environment. As participants build their personal memory books, they are invited to link emotions, memories, and life stories with elements from nature, fostering awareness of local landscapes, seasonal cycles, and ecological changes over time.*

*Through this process, scrapbooking becomes more than a creative exercise: it also nurtures a sense of care, responsibility, and appreciation for the natural world. The combination of artistic expression and environmental elements helps participants develop a deeper understanding of how personal well-being and the health of the planet are interconnected.*

## 3. Facilitator Guidance

Phase	Description
<b>Facilitator's Role:</b>	<i>The facilitator's role is to guide participants through a creative and environmentally grounded scrapbooking process by creating a safe, supportive space for emotional expression, introducing natural and recycled materials to promote sustainability, and helping participants connect their memories and feelings with elements from nature. They demonstrate simple creative techniques, encourage storytelling and reflection, and foster social connection within the group, while also raising awareness about caring for the local environment. Through gentle guidance and inclusive support, the facilitator ensures that the activity nurtures both personal well-being and appreciation for the natural world.</i>

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Phase	Description
<b>Tips for Implementation:</b>	<p><i>To implement this activity effectively, prepare a variety of natural and recycled materials in advance and offer simple creative prompts that help participants connect memories to environmental elements. Keep instructions clear and slow-paced, demonstrating each step visibly and checking in with participants individually. Encourage gentle storytelling as participants work, but allow silence when needed, letting the creative process unfold naturally. Adapt tools for physical limitations (e.g., larger scissors, pre-cut shapes), and ensure the workspace is comfortable, well-lit, and accessible. Finally, reinforce environmental awareness by modeling sustainable practices-such as reusing materials or collecting nature items responsibly-and celebrate each participant's unique creation to build confidence and engagement.</i></p>
<b>Adaptations:</b>	<p><i>The activity can be easily adapted by offering pre-cut natural elements or larger, easy-to-grip tools for participants with limited mobility or fine motor challenges, as well as providing visual templates or step-by-step guides for those who benefit from more structure. If weather conditions prevent collecting natural materials outdoors, substitute with previously gathered, dried, or pressed items, or use photographs of nature as alternatives. When natural materials are scarce, rely on recycled paper, fabric scraps, or simple household items to maintain the sustainability focus. For participants with cognitive difficulties, shorten the activity into smaller steps, repeat instructions gently, and use memory prompts tied to familiar environmental elements. Overall, keep the process flexible so that each person can participate comfortably and meaningfully regardless of ability, weather, or material availability.</i></p>

#### 4. Measure Impact and Effectiveness:

*All questions are phrased so they can easily be used with Likert scales (1–5) or as short-response items. The same questions should be use both for pre-and post-intervention assessments*

- *How strongly do you feel that protecting the environment is important for your community?*
- *How aware are you of the environmental issues affecting your local area (e.g., waste, biodiversity loss, water quality)?*
- *How confident do you feel in explaining basic environmental concepts (e.g., sustainability, recycling, conservation)?*
- *How often do you spend time outdoors or engage with natural elements (plants, flowers, stones, etc.)?*
- *How connected do you feel to the natural environment around you?*

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- *How comfortable are you using natural materials in creative activities?*
- *How would you rate your current level of stress or emotional tension?*
- *How often do you feel calm or uplifted when engaging with nature?*
- *How connected do you feel to others during group activities?*
- *How confident are you in using simple artistic techniques (cutting, arranging, decorating, assembling materials)?*
- *How familiar are you with scrapbooking, collage, or nature-based art practices?*
- *How comfortable do you feel expressing emotions or memories through creative activities?*

## 5. Environmental and Sustainability Dimension

<p><b>Eco-aspect:</b></p>	<p><i>The tool promotes environmental awareness and sustainable behavior by encouraging participants to work with natural, locally sourced, and recycled materials, helping them recognize the value of reusing resources rather than relying on new, manufactured items. Through hands-on engagement with elements from their surrounding ecology-such as leaves, flowers, seeds, or textures found in nature-participants deepen their understanding of local landscapes and develop a greater appreciation for natural cycles like seasons, growth, and renewal. By integrating these materials into creative processes, the activity fosters a sense of respect and care for the environment while gently reinforcing everyday sustainable habits. This experiential connection between artistic expression and ecological awareness helps participants internalize environmentally responsible behaviors in meaningful, practical ways.</i></p>
<p><b>Community Impact:</b></p>	<p><i>Scrapbooking can benefit the community by creating opportunities for shared exhibitions where participants showcase their nature-inspired memory books, strengthening intergenerational connection and local pride. These exhibitions or storytelling events can become community gatherings that celebrate personal histories and the local environment, encouraging others to reflect on their own relationships with nature. The activity can also inspire collective initiatives such as group clean-ups, nature walks, or seasonal material-collecting days, helping residents care for shared spaces while fostering social cohesion. By turning individual creative work into community engagement, scrapbooking contributes to cultural enrichment, environmental stewardship, and a stronger sense of belonging.</i></p>

## 6. Case studies and best practices

<p><i>Title of the Case Study or Best practice</i></p>	<p><i>Lietuvos aklyjų ir silpnaregių sąjungos Klaipėdos rajono filialas</i></p>
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	<i>Klaipėda District Branch of the Lithuanian Union of the Blind and Visually Impaired</i>
<b>Location / Context:</b>	<i>Public organisation for Blind and Visually Impaired</i>
<b>Brief description:</b>	<i>Scrapbooking practice was performed. The meeting lasted for several hours. Around 15 people were participated</i>
<b>Key outcomes:</b>	<i>The scrapbooking activity led to meaningful emotional, social, and environmental impacts, as participants reported greater emotional uplift, reduced stress, and a renewed sense of personal identity through revisiting memories and expressing them creatively. Socially, the shared process of storytelling and creating together strengthened relationships, reduced feelings of isolation, and built a sense of community belonging, especially in rural settings where social opportunities may be limited. Environmentally, the use of natural and recycled materials increased participants' awareness of local ecology, inspired more responsible use of resources, and motivated them to engage in simple sustainable behaviors such as reusing household items or paying greater attention to seasonal changes. For the wider community, these individual shifts translated into stronger environmental appreciation, more shared initiatives like nature walks or clean-up days, and a richer cultural life through exhibitions or group storytelling events.</i>
<b>Success factors:</b>	<i>The activity was effective because it combined a gentle, supportive facilitation style with hands-on engagement using natural and recycled materials that felt familiar and meaningful to participants. The facilitator provided clear guidance while allowing personal interpretation, helping participants feel safe to express emotions and share memories. Using materials sourced from the local environment strengthened participants' sense of place and made the activity accessible, low-cost, and culturally relevant. High levels of participant engagement-through storytelling, creative exploration, and collaboration-enhanced motivation and enjoyment, while community support, such as offering spaces, contributing materials, or participating in exhibitions, reinforced a shared sense of purpose. Together, these elements created an experience that was both personally enriching and socially cohesive, with environmental awareness naturally integrated into the creative process..</i>
<b>Challenges and Lessons Learned (optional):</b>	<i>There was only one facilitator and too many participants. For the future it is better to have at least one facilitator (helper) per 5 person, especially taking about seniors.</i>
<b>Web link (if available)</b>	

## 7. Implementation Materials and Handouts

- Acid-free scrapbooks or albums
- Colored and patterned scrapbooking paper
- Archival-quality pens and markers

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- Stickers, ribbons, washi tape, buttons, and brads
- Glue sticks, double-sided tape, photo corners
- Scissors, rulers, cutting mats
- Old magazines or books for collage
- Printed photographs or memorabilia
- Journaling cards and templates
- Stamps and ink pads
- Page protectors
- Storage boxes for sorting materials

**Type of Material:**

- Handout                       Worksheet                       Reflection Sheet  
 Poster                       Instruction Card                       Handout  
 Other all material for the scrapbooking

**Description and Use:**

*The activity begins with a short preparation period in which participants are welcomed, given their kits, and seated at equipped workstations. The facilitator then introduces the session by showing completed scrapbooking examples, explaining therapeutic benefits such as memory recall, storytelling, and self-esteem building, and inviting participants to think about the story or memory they want to express. Participants select a personal theme-such as family, travel, hobbies, or holidays-and share ideas within the group to inspire one another before organizing relevant photos or memorabilia using trays to keep items sorted and accessible. They are guided in designing their page layout, experimenting with layering, symmetry, and different colors or textures before adding personal touches like stickers, calligraphy titles, journaling, quotes, or reflections. Once the design is ready, participants assemble their pages by securely attaching elements and placing completed work into protective sleeves. The session concludes with a sharing and reflection round, where participants present their creations and discuss the memories and emotions that surfaced, followed by a brief closing in which the facilitator thanks everyone, encourages continued scrapbooking, and offers take-home prompts for future pages.*

**Template / File:**

*Insert template or link*

**Guidance for Facilitators:**

*1 facilitator per 5 participants*

*Volunteers/helpers may support with materials handling, writing prompts, and guidance*

*Emotional sensitivity is important, especially if personal memories are difficult*

*Be sensitive to emotions; some memories may be bittersweet.*

*Offer gentle prompts or journaling questions if participants are stuck.*

*Celebrate every creation-focus on meaning, not perfection.*

*Keep backup materials for participants who may forget theirs.*

*Incorporate soft background music if calming.*



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**ERA Project**

**WP3 Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit**

**GOZDE REHABILITATION CENTER**

# **Eco-Stone & Wood Painting for Elderly Engagement**

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## 1. Basic Information

<b>Title of the Tool:</b>	<b>Eco-Stone &amp; Wood Painting for Elderly Engagement</b>		
<b>Required Setting:</b> <i>(Tick or describe where it takes place — e.g., garden, classroom, community space, online, offline, etc.)</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Indoor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outdoor	<input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid
This activity can be delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in the therapy/art room of Gözde Rehabilitation Center,</li> <li>• in day-care rooms, community halls or rural elderly centers,</li> <li>• or outdoors when collecting stones or observing natural textures.</li> </ul> Indoor settings allow accessibility and safety; outdoor settings deepen environmental engagement.			

The tool help to engage participants in painting on natural materials such as stones and small wood pieces. These materials provide rich tactile surfaces that promote sensory stimulation, hand–eye coordination and fine motor skills. The textures also encourage elderly clients to connect with natural elements through touch and visual exploration.

The tool makes easier to the progresses through the following stages of the activity:

1. **Introduction to Natural Surfaces:** Participants explore the weight, temperature and texture of stones and wood.
2. **Eco-Friendly Preparation:** Facilitators present natural dyes or low-toxicity paints suitable for elderly participants.
3. **Artistic Creation:** Participants paint simple shapes, motifs or personal symbols on stones/wood pieces using thick brushes or sponge applicators.
4. **Environmental Reflection:** Facilitators discuss where the materials come from, how they form in nature and how natural objects can be reused creatively.
5. **Sharing and Display:** Participants share their work and reflect on memories or sensations related to nature.

This tool directly contributes to ERA objectives by:

- creating a practical, accessible eco-art tool
- customizing the activity for elderly individuals with physical or cognitive limitations
- providing structured, replicable training for professionals, caregivers and rehabilitation staff

It supports emotional stability, sensory awareness, creativity and environmental education.

## 2. Connection to Environmental education and Eco-Art Therapy Principles:

This tool integrates environmental education with eco-art therapy by guiding elderly participants to work directly with natural textures such as stones and wood. These materials, collected respectfully from the local environment, help participants reconnect with nature through touch, temperature, weight and surface patterns. The sensory engagement provided by these natural objects supports grounding, emotional comfort and cognitive stimulation. From an environmental education perspective, the activity highlights:

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- the natural formation of stones and wood,
- the role of these elements in ecosystems,
- the idea of respectfully reusing natural materials instead of purchasing synthetic items,
- simple sustainability practices such as collecting materials ethically, reducing waste and valuing natural resources.

Facilitators briefly discuss where stones and wood come from, how they change with weather and time, and why protecting natural landscapes matters. These short, accessible explanations help elderly participants understand environmental concepts without overwhelming cognitive load.

From an eco-art therapy perspective, painting on stone and wood supports:

- sensory integration (touch, sight, proprioception),
- emotional expression through color and pattern,
- fine motor skill activation through brushwork,
- cognitive recall via nature-related memories,
- calmness and mindfulness through repetitive painting motions.

The natural textures create a unique tactile experience that promotes grounding and emotional regulation—important for elderly individuals who may experience anxiety, cognitive decline or reduced mobility.

The activity also strengthens personal connection to nature by encouraging participants to choose materials that “feel meaningful” to them. This reflective process deepens ecological appreciation and nurtures respect for natural environments.

Overall, Eco-Stone & Wood Painting fosters environmental responsibility, creative expression and psychosocial well-being, making it an ideal eco-art therapy practice for elderly care settings.

### 3. Facilitator Guidance

Phase	Description
<b>Facilitator’s Role:</b>	<p>The facilitator acts as a supportive guide, ensuring safety, comfort and emotional well-being throughout the activity. Their role is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide clear, short and accessible instructions for elderly participants.</li> <li>• Demonstrate each step visually, especially for participants with cognitive impairment.</li> <li>• Encourage sensory exploration of stones and wood (texture, temperature, weight).</li> <li>• Adapt tools and materials to participants’ motor abilities.</li> <li>• Offer reassurance, positive feedback and gentle emotional support.</li> <li>• Observe signs of fatigue, overstimulation or emotional discomfort.</li> <li>• Reinforce environmental messages: respect for natural objects, ethical collection and sustainable reuse.</li> <li>• Promote social interaction and group participation when appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>The facilitator should never judge artistic quality; the goal is engagement, expression and well-being.</p>

Phase	Description
<p><b>Tips for Implementation:</b></p>	<p>Use <b>large-handled brushes</b>, sponge dabbers or thick markers for participants with reduced grip strength.</p> <p>Place non-slip mats under stones or wood pieces to prevent movement during painting.</p> <p>Keep instructions simple, repeating steps when needed.</p> <p>Allow participants to choose stones or wood pieces that “feel right” to encourage emotional connection.</p> <p>Prepare materials in advance to reduce waiting time and maintain focus.</p> <p>Offer color prompts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Which color reminds you of a place in nature?”</li> <li>• “Does this stone feel warm or cool in your hand?”</li> </ul> <p>Encourage participants to paint simple patterns—dots, lines, hearts, leaves—or culturally familiar motifs.</p> <p>Use natural or low-toxicity paints to ensure safety.</p> <p>Provide calming background music or nature sounds to enhance relaxation.</p>
<p><b>Adaptations:</b></p>	<p><b>For limited fine motor skills:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use thicker brushes or sponge applicators.</li> <li>• Stabilize stones/wood with a soft cloth or small tray.</li> <li>• Offer hand-over-hand assistance when needed.</li> </ul> <p><b>For cognitive decline (dementia, mild cognitive impairment):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use visual cue cards showing shapes and simple patterns.</li> <li>• Give short, repeated instructions.</li> <li>• Focus on sensory exploration rather than outcome.</li> </ul> <p><b>For sensory sensitivities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide smooth stones if rough textures are uncomfortable.</li> <li>• Offer scent-free paints for participants sensitive to odors.</li> </ul> <p><b>For low vision:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use high-contrast paint colors (yellow, red, black, white).</li> <li>• Work with larger stones or wood panels for better visibility.</li> </ul> <p><b>For mobility limitations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct the entire activity at the table; avoid requiring movement.</li> <li>• Bring pre-collected natural materials directly to participants.</li> </ul> <p><b>For emotional vulnerability:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid pressuring participants to share memories; allow voluntary expression.</li> <li>• Provide grounding techniques (breathing, touching the stone surface).</li> </ul> <p><b>For rural settings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate a short nature walk to responsibly collect stones/wood, ensuring safety.</li> <li>• Alternatively, bring pre-cleaned natural materials for easier implementation.</li> </ul>

## 4. Measure Impact and Effectiveness:

### Pre-and post-intervention assessments:

*Use these questions before and after the activity to measure changes in environmental awareness, well-being, sensory engagement and sustainable behaviour.*

### A. Environmental Awareness & Connection to Nature

- I feel connected to natural objects such as stones and wood.
- I enjoy spending time around natural materials.
- I am more aware of the textures and colors found in nature.
- I understand that natural materials can be reused creatively instead of being thrown away.

### B. Understanding of Environmental Concepts & Sustainable Behaviours

- I understand where stones and wood come from in nature.
- I am aware that natural materials can be collected responsibly without harming the environment.
- I try to reduce waste and reuse materials when possible.
- I make simple efforts to save energy at home (turning off lights, reducing water use).

### C. Artistic Engagement & Creative Confidence

- I feel confident painting on stones or wood.
- I enjoy expressing myself through colors and simple shapes.
- Working with natural textures makes creative activities more enjoyable for me.

### D. Well-Being Indicators

- This activity helps me feel calm and relaxed.
- I feel happier after participating in creative activities.
- I feel less anxious or stressed when focusing on painting.

### E. Sensory & Motor Engagement

- I pay more attention to how things feel when I touch them.
- Painting on stones or wood helps me use my hands more comfortably.
- The activity improves my focus and concentration.

### F. Open-Ended Questions (Short, Elderly-Friendly)

- **Before:** “What do stones or wood remind you of?”
- **After:** “How did painting on natural materials make you feel?”

## G. Facilitator Observation Checklist

- Participant remained engaged and attentive.
- Participant demonstrated improved or sustained motor activity.
- Participant interacted socially with others.
- Participant showed positive emotional reactions.
- Participant handled materials safely.
- Participant reflected on environmental aspects of the activity.

### 5. Environmental and Sustainability Dimension

<p><b>Eco-aspect:</b></p>	<p>This tool promotes environmental awareness by showing elderly participants how natural materials such as stones and wood can be respectfully collected, cleaned, and creatively reused instead of being discarded. Using these materials encourages a sustainable approach to art, demonstrating that creativity does not require buying synthetic or chemical-heavy supplies.</p> <p>Participants learn simple environmental concepts—such as the natural formation of stones, the life cycle of trees, and the importance of caring for natural landscapes—through tactile exploration. This sensory engagement helps elderly individuals reconnect with nature in a way that is accessible, emotionally grounding and cognitively stimulating.</p> <p>The use of eco-friendly or low-toxicity paints supports environmental responsibility and ensures safety in rehabilitation settings. By reusing natural items, the activity introduces key sustainability principles such as upcycling, waste reduction, and respectful interaction with the environment.</p>
<p><b>Community Impact:</b></p>	<p>Eco-Stone &amp; Wood Painting has the potential to create a ripple effect within the community by inspiring environmentally conscious creativity. The painted stones and wood pieces can be displayed in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the rehabilitation center,</li> <li>• local community halls,</li> <li>• rural village squares,</li> <li>• or outdoor sensory gardens.</li> </ul> <p>These displays raise community awareness about nature-friendly art and promote positive visibility of elderly participants.</p> <p>Moreover, the activity encourages intergenerational exchange. Family members, caregivers, students and volunteers can participate alongside the elderly, strengthening social bonds and sharing ecological knowledge.</p> <p>The practice may also motivate small community actions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nature walks to ethically collect stones,</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clean-up events,</li> <li>• tree-planting or garden-care activities,</li> <li>• creating outdoor “nature art corners.”</li> </ul> <p>Such initiatives help foster a sense of belonging, environmental stewardship and community pride.</p>
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## 6. Case studies and best practices

<b>Title of the Case Study or Best practice</b>	<b>Stone &amp; Wood Painting for Sensory Activation and Emotional Well-Being in Elderly Care</b>
<b>Location / Context:</b>	<p>The activity was implemented within <b>Gözde Rehabilitation Center’s therapeutic art room</b>, involving elderly clients aged 67–89 who receive long-term or day-care support. Many participants experience reduced mobility, mild cognitive impairment or diminished fine motor skills.</p> <p>A second implementation occurred in a <b>rural elderly community center</b>, making the practice accessible to older adults living in smaller villages.</p>
<b>Brief description:</b>	<p>The workshop introduced elderly participants to painting on natural materials such as smooth stones and small wooden pieces. Facilitators first guided participants through a sensory exploration of the textures, temperatures and forms of the materials.</p> <p>Participants then painted simple patterns, culturally familiar symbols or nature-inspired motifs using thick brushes and eco-friendly paints. Staff members provided physical support when needed and encouraged self-expression at every step.</p> <p>The session ended with a group circle where participants shared the memories or feelings associated with the stones or wood, reinforcing emotional processing and environmental awareness.</p>
<b>Key outcomes:</b>	<p><b>Sensory stimulation:</b> Participants showed improved tactile engagement and heightened awareness of natural textures.</p> <p><b>Motor function improvement:</b> Repetitive brush movements supported fine motor activity and hand–eye coordination.</p> <p><b>Emotional well-being:</b> Participants reported feeling calmer, happier and more focused.</p> <p><b>Social interaction:</b> The group format encouraged conversation and reduced feelings of isolation.</p> <p><b>Environmental awareness:</b> Participants better understood the natural origins of stones and wood, and the importance of responsible reuse.</p>

<b>Success factors:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The natural textures of stone and wood provided calming sensory feedback.</li> <li>● Simple step-by-step instructions made the activity accessible for individuals with cognitive decline.</li> <li>● Thick, easy-to-grip tools allowed participation from those with hand tremors or weakness.</li> <li>● Facilitator patience and emotional support helped hesitant participants feel more confident.</li> <li>● The reflective sharing circle strengthened group connection and memory recall.</li> <li>● Use of minimal, eco-friendly materials modeled sustainable practices.</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges and Lessons Learned (optional):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some stones rolled or slipped; using non-slip mats resolved this.</li> <li>● Participants with advanced cognitive decline needed more one-to-one support.</li> <li>● Paint drying time required additional care to avoid smudging; using hair dryers on low heat helped.</li> <li>● Access to natural materials in rural settings depended on weather; pre-collected stones were helpful.</li> </ul>
<b>Web link (if available)</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEKD9_mZvW1vbcAw6jw8TRoK5Udl6wbU3">https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLEKD9_mZvW1vbcAw6jw8TRoK5Udl6wbU3</a>

## 7. Implementation Materials and Handouts

### Purpose of the Material:

The materials are designed to help elderly participants follow the activity step by step, reduce anxiety, support fine motor skills, and reinforce environmental awareness. They provide visual cues, simple explanations and structured guidance suitable for individuals with cognitive or physical limitations.

For facilitators, the materials ensure consistent delivery of the activity in both rehabilitation and rural settings, supporting training outcomes.

### Type of Material:

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Handout | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Worksheet        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reflection Sheet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poster             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Instruction Card | <input type="checkbox"/> Handout                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....         |  |  |

### Description and Use:

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect 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. Project Number: 2024-1-TR01-KA220-ADU-000250176

### **Before the Activity:**

- The **Instruction Card** introduces the activity, shows images of stones, wood pieces and simple paint patterns.
- Materials are presented physically so participants can touch them before starting.
- Facilitators briefly explain environmental respect when collecting natural materials.

### **During the Activity:**

- The **Worksheet** provides large, simple visuals showing:
  1. Select your stone/wood
  2. Feel the texture
  3. Choose your color
  4. Paint simple shapes or patterns
  5. Let it dry carefully
- Icons illustrate each step for participants with cognitive or visual limitations.
- High-contrast colors and large fonts (16–18 pt) help elderly participants follow instructions.
- Tools such as thick brushes or sponge applicators are indicated on the sheet.

### **After the Activity:**

- The **Reflection Sheet** includes very short, accessible questions:
  - *“How did the texture feel in your hand?”*
  - *“Which color made you feel calm or happy?”*
  - *“What did you learn about nature today?”*
- Facilitators may write down verbal responses for participants who cannot write.

### **Template / File:**

A recommended design includes:

- A4 format
- Minimal text, more icons
- Nature-themed visuals (leaf, tree, stone symbols)
- Space for writing or drawing
- Clear steps numbered 1–5
- Boxes for facilitator notes
- A small section on environmental respect (e.g., “Take only what you need from nature.”)

### **Guidance for Facilitators:**

- Review the materials in advance and prepare stones/wood pieces to avoid delays.
- Offer one-on-one explanation for participants with cognitive or hearing challenges.
- Demonstrate each step and place the instruction card clearly in front of each participant.
- Make sure hands are clean and dry to avoid slipping stones.
- Encourage participants to feel the texture first — sensory grounding is part of the therapy.
- Use reflection sheets gently; avoid pressuring participants to share sensitive memories.

- In rural settings, explain where the stones or wood were collected and why responsible gathering is important.

**For seniors with visual impairments:**

- Use **contrasting background surfaces** to increase pigment visibility (e.g., dark tray lining under light-colored pigments).
- Provide **verbal step-by-step instructions** and allow participants to **touch and feel materials** before use.
- Encourage use of **high-contrast, tactile elements**, such as thicker wood blocks or raised outlines.

**For participants with cognitive challenges:**

- Break the session into **clear, sequential steps** using visual cues or icons.
- Use **simple, repetitive patterns** in exercises to reduce cognitive load.
- Offer **individualized support** and repetition as needed to promote confidence and creativity.

**For culturally diverse groups:**

- Begin with a **cultural storytelling circle** where participants can share artistic traditions from their heritage.
- Integrate **universal symbols** or motifs across cultures (e.g., trees, birds, water) to foster common ground.
- Offer the option to **incorporate local/national colors or styles** into the painting process.



## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS



Co-funded by  
the European Union

**2024-1-TR01-KA220-ADU-000250176**

*Environment Reintegration and Awareness-Based Art Therapy for Rural Elderly, ERA*

UNDER THE ERASMUS + PROGRAMME

**Stone & Wood Painting**

**GOZDE REHABILITATION CENTER**

**DATE**

No	NAME	E-MAIL	COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE AND ADDRESS	Signature of the person



## Eco-Art Therapy Participation

# CERTIFICATE

**Awarded to**

**[Participant's Name]**

**for taking part in the  
Stone & Wood Painting Workshop**

organized within the framework of the Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit initiative, merging art, nature, and well-being. Through creative expression and environmental awareness activities, the participant contributed to fostering personal growth, emotional balance, and a deeper connection with nature and community.

Your participation helped nurture both personal well-being and care for our shared environment. We appreciate your openness, creativity, and contribution to building a more mindful and sustainable community.

**Date:**

**Facilitator / Trainer:**

**Place:**