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VOL #4

ENVIRONMENT REINTEGRATION AND AWARNESS-BASED ART THERAPY FOR RURAL ELDERLY

Project No: 2024-1-TR01-KA220_ADU-000250176 JULY, 2026

Creativity, Nature and Well-Being

Discover the ERA Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit

The ERA project has reached an important milestone with the development of the Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit — a practical collection of creative activities designed to support the emotional well-being, social participation and environmental awareness of older people, particularly those living in rural communities.

By bringing together artistic expression and environmental education, the toolkit encourages participants to create, reflect, share memories and reconnect with nature in a welcoming and supportive setting. It contributes to the wider ERA objectives of promoting active ageing, reducing social isolation and improving quality of life among rural elderly people.





What is the Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit?

The toolkit has been developed as an accessible resource for educators, caregivers, social workers, community organisations and other professionals working with older adults.

Its activities use natural, locally available or recycled materials to connect creativity with sustainability. They can be organised indoors or outdoors and adapted according to participants' mobility, cognitive abilities, sensory needs, cultural background and available resources.

The focus is not on producing a "perfect" piece of art. Instead, participants are encouraged to explore materials at their own pace, express emotions, recall personal experiences and enjoy creating together in a safe and non-judgmental environment.

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Six Creative Tools to Explore

Eco-Marbling Art for Elderly Well-Being
Participants use natural pigments to create flowing patterns that support relaxation, concentration and emotional expression.

Stone and Diamond-Patterned Tapestries and Mosaics
Natural stones and recycled materials are arranged into colourful patterns inspired by memories, traditions and nature.

Creativity, Tradition and Relaxation through Hand Embroidery
Simple embroidery patterns encourage relaxation, fine motor activity and connection with local culture and traditions.

Decorative Creations from Raw Wool
Participants transform natural or reused wool into simple ornaments and figurines while rediscovering traditional crafts.

Scrapbooking: Preserving Memories Through Art
Photos, recycled paper and natural materials are combined to preserve memories and encourage storytelling and social connection.

Eco-Stone and Wood Painting for Elderly Engagement
Participants decorate natural surfaces, supporting creativity, sensory engagement, coordination and emotional well-being.

More Than a Collection of Activities

Each tool provides practical guidance for preparing and delivering the session. The toolkit includes:

- **information about the required setting and materials;**
- **clear guidance for facilitators;**
- **adaptations for different physical, cognitive and sensory needs;**
- **environmental and sustainability elements;**
- **questions for reflection and impact assessment;**
- **case studies, implementation materials and handouts.**

This structure makes the toolkit flexible enough to be used in elderly care centres, community spaces, educational institutions and rural organisations.



Learning, Adapting and Improving

Feedback from participants and professionals helped shape the toolkit into a more practical and inclusive resource. The final approach places particular importance on:

- **flexible activity duration;**
- **clear step-by-step and visual instructions;**
- **the use of accessible and locally available materials;**
- **adaptation to regional traditions and cultural practices;**
- **group-based activities that encourage communication.**

These improvements ensure that facilitators can adapt the activities to different communities without losing the toolkit's central connection between art, nature and well-being

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Create, Connect and Reconnect with Nature

The ERA Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit demonstrates that meaningful creative activities do not require expensive equipment or advanced artistic skills. A stone, a piece of wool, a photograph or a recycled fabric can become the starting point for expression, memory, conversation and connection.

Through these six tools, older adults are invited not only to create art, but also to rediscover familiar traditions, build relationships and experience nature in new and meaningful ways.

Explore and download the Eco-Art Therapy Toolkit on the ERA project website.



