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If There Are No Ethics, There Is No Humanity

Contemplating Ethical Aspects
in Participatory Research with Substance Users

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Abstract

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This master's thesis examines ethical and practical considerations and approaches in conducting participatory research with people using drugs and facing homelessness. The conceptual framework in this research observes the creativity-based research setting through the lens of sociocultural animation, qualified empathy, and the sense of belonging. It emphasizes the ethical relationships between the researcher and participants.

In this research I explore strategies to shift the perspectives of homeless people with substance use from an individual-focused perspective to a community oriented-one. Qualitative, creativity based participatory research design was applied in this research. By engaging participants in creative expression, this study seeks to build connections and find ways to enable information that can be hard to get with traditional qualitative research methods. I worked with homeless people who used drugs, creating together an art piece. The process was documented with participatory research methods. The research question is: What kinds of practical and ethical aspects need to be considered when conducting creativity-based participatory research with homeless people with heavy substance use?

My data generation included ethical and workshop journals and recorded semi-structured interviews. The data was analyzed by using narrative approach. The findings expose that creative engagement within a safe and inclusive environment can foster trust, agency, commitment, and engagement. The findings also highlighted the importance of ethical considerations and prioritization between the generation of data and fostering the trust of the community. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that ethically implemented creativity-based participatory research can help homeless people using drugs connect and feel social inclusion and foster the feeling of belonging. This research can also offer an ethical model for future research that considers the voice of people in vulnerable life situations.

Keywords: empathy, ethics, homelessness, participatory research, substance use

Abstrakti

Tekijä:	Annuska Dal Maso
Opinnäytetyön otsikko:	Ilman etiikkaa, ei ole ihmisyyttä: Pohdintoja eettisistä näkökulmista osallistavassa tutkimuksessa huumeita käyttävien ihmisten kanssa
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Tässä tutkielmassa tarkastelen eettisiä ja käytännöllisiä näkökulmia ja lähestymistapoja osallistavassa tutkimuksessa päihteitä käyttävien ja asunnottomuutta kokevien ihmisten kanssa. Tutkimuksen käsitteellinen viitekehys perustuu sosio-kulttuurisen animaation, empatian ja kuuluvuuden käsitteisiin. Työssä korostetaan tutkijan ja osallistujien välistä eettistä suhdetta. Tutkielmani lähtökohtana on laadullinen, luovaan toimintaan perustuva, osallistava metodologia. Tutkimuksessa tarkastelin strategioita, joilla voidaan muuttaa päihteitä käyttävien asunnottomuutta kokevien ihmisten ajattelutapaa yksilökeskeisestä yhteisöllisempään suuntaan. Osallistamalla asunnottomuutta kokevia ihmisiä luovaan toimintaan pyrin luomaan maan yhteyksiä ja löytämään tapoja saavuttaa informaatiota, joita voi olla vaikea saada perinteisillä laadullisen tutkimuksen menetelmillä. Tässä tutkimuksessa työskentelin päihteitä käyttävien ja asunnottomuutta kokevien ihmisten kanssa. Osana työskentelyämme loimme yhdessä taideteoksen. Dokumentoin prosessin osallistavan tutkimuksen menetelmillä.

Tutkielmani tutkimuskysymys on: Millaisia käytännöllisiä ja eettisiä näkökulmia on huomioitava, kun toteutetaan luovaan ilmaisuun perustuvaa osallistavaa tutkimusta päihteitä käyttävien asunnottomien kanssa?

Muodostin aineiston eettisen päiväkirjan ja työpajapäiväkirjan sekä nauhoitettujen puolistrukturoitujen haastattelujen kautta. Analysoin aineiston narratiivista lähestymistapaa käyttäen. Tulokset osoittavat, että luova toiminta turvallisessa ja hyväksyvässä ympäristössä voi edistää luottamusta, toimijuutta, sitoutumista ja osallisuuden kokemusta. Tulokset toivat myös esiin eettisten näkökulmien ja tasapainottelun merkityksen aineistonmuodostuksen ja yhteisön luottamuksen vaalimisen välillä.

Tulosten perusteella esitän, että eettisesti toteutettu, luovaan toimintaan perustuva, osallistava tutkimus voi edistää sosiaalista osallisuutta ja yhteenkuuluvuuden tunnetta. Tutkimus voi myös tarjota eettisen lähestymisen mallin tuleville tutkimuksille, jotka antavat äänen haavoittuvassa elämäntilanteessa oleville ihmisille.

Avainsanat: asunnottomuus, empatia, etiikka, osallistava tutkimus, päihteiden käyttö

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1 Introduction

Every human being has the need to be seen (Harris & Fiske, 2010, pp. 848–849). Within this master's thesis project, I was actively engaged with a group of individuals experiencing homelessness and heavy substance abuse. Employing creative approaches, I have structured and implemented a series of workshops, adopting participatory methodology and methods that involved participants in the process. This research explores participatory research; it is about understanding the practical and ethical considerations essential in conducting creativity-based participatory research with a group of people in a vulnerable life situation.

Homeless individuals who have severe substance abuse problems often experience disconnection from mainstream society. The sense of isolation and loneliness intensifies their struggles and might create a barrier that prevents from accessing essential support services potentially exacerbating their mental health conditions and higher mortality (Cacioppo & Cacioppo, 2018, pp. 127–197; Hawkey & Cacioppo, 2010, pp. 218–227). Vanjusov (2023) has researched the access to services in substance abuse treatment and she says that while services for people with substance abuse may seem compliant with legislation in Finland, they often fail to meet individual needs. For example, although legislation in Finland requires that individuals with substance abuse issues are provided with certain, clear treatment services, such as detoxification, therapy, and psychosocial support, these services do not always meet individual needs. Someone for instance may require specific support concurrently with other health issues, but the services available may not necessarily address this complexity. Thus, while the services may appear compliant with the law, they may not fully address the individual's needs. This complexity, stemming from organizational, informational, and experiential factors, includes challenges for service providers striving to ensure genuine accessibility for all in need (Vanjusov, 2023, pp. 21–22, 32, 36). Vanjusov (2023, p. 185) also considers that the criminalization of drugs plays a

significant role in the negative attitude against people using drugs and gives it a strong moral stigma of being wrong.

Loneliness felt among homeless people poses public health concern, linked to various physical and mental health conditions (Bertam et al., 2021, p. 1). Bower, Gournay, Perz, and Conroy (2021) argue that people might encounter 'social loneliness', which refers to a perceived lack of friendships in terms of quality or quantity. Bower et al. (2021, p. e1672) describe loneliness being a type of emotion that can be described as lack of emotional attachment towards someone. In their study Bower et al. (2021, p. e1671) say that even when individuals have housing, they may still feel isolated due to the stigma and marginalization they experienced while being homeless. This situation might make them feel even more isolated from the surrounding society and the feeling of belonging can become so hard that they cannot overstep that barrier at all.

People experiencing homelessness and actively using substances are a marginalized group of people. It is hard to tell the exact amount of this group of people as we cannot be sure if all people experiencing homelessness are using substances. In year 2023, there were 3429 people in Finland who experienced homelessness and out of that number 414 individuals are considered sleeping only in shelters or outdoors (Ara, The Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland).

People having severe substance use are often homeless, unemployed, undereducated and socioeconomically in a vulnerable position (Salasuo & Rantala, 2002, p. 44). Ruuska and Sulkunen (2013, p. 34) define addiction as a chronic disease that includes strong urge and need for substance use or repetition of certain activity. According to Granfelt (1998, p. 82), the concept of marginalization includes an existential aspect that signifies the experience of losing even the meaning and will for life. Granfelt (1998, pp. 82–83) explains that the line of marginalization cannot be drawn strictly between unwillingness or voluntariness as the situations and point of views vary in every moment. Marginalization is something

that exists on a spectrum between coercion and choice; individuals both drift and choose (Granfelt, 1998, p. 83).

People using drugs and experiencing homelessness are being already marginalized by their own lifestyle, whether they have chosen or drift into it. These same people carry also the heavy burden of stigma that drugs bring upon them. Partanen (2002, pp. 18–19) explains that narcophobia in Finland causes a strong reluctant feeling of wanting to push the problems drugs cause as far away from so called normal life. This pushes these already marginalized individuals to also carry the stigma of a problem and that affects also the way they see themselves. Partanen (2002, pp. 18–19) explains that narcophobia leads the individual to see their stigma as something they deserve and it begins to define their identity (Partanen, 2002, pp. 18–19). Vanjusov (2023, pp. 184–185) explains stigma as a negative social label or perception that marginalizes individuals who deviate from societal norms. She calls it a mechanism that pushes individuals who deviate from the prevailing and accepted norms into the margins and hinders them from seeking help (Vanjusov, 2023, p. 185).

According to Vanjusov (2023, p. 214) attitudes have hardened particularly towards individuals facing complex issues such as homelessness next to heavy drug use. In her work, Vanjusov (2023, p. 184) claims that individuals may feel like they are not being listened to or taken seriously, even though they should be listened to. People in this margin might perceive that seeking help is not worth it. The problem of disconnecting from society becomes most apparent when existing societal structures fail to effectively engage and assist those in need (Vanjusov, 2023, pp. 184-185). Implementing communal thinking and approach becomes imperative as it acknowledges the power of community engagement and the possibility to build a connection that can break through these barriers. By implementing a creativity-based approach together with participatory research, this research aims not only to address the practical and ethical steps that participatory research might need to succeed but also to foster a sense of belonging.

Salasuo (2004, p. 51) states that even though active and problematic substance usage often connects to marginalization, it is not a direct cause of it. Active substance use is linked to issues that collectively undermine an individual's agency, such as homelessness and mental health problems. Substance use is just one problem among many in a broader set of challenges (Ranta 2020; Salasuo 2004, p. 51). In year 2017, there were 31 100–44 300 amphetamine and opioid users in Finland. This is 0,9–1,3 % from the 15–64-year-old citizens in Finland (Rönkä, Ollgren, Alho, Brummer-Korvenkontio, Gunnar, Karjalainen, Partanen, & Väre, 2020). Even though heavy and problematic drug usage concerns only a minority of the Finnish population (Salasuo, 2004, p. 29), the amount of active and problematic usage is rising (The Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, THL). The public discourse around drug usage in Finland reflects some sort of dehumanization, turning users into subjects of surveillance, punishment, and stigma, reinforced by drug prohibition laws that are harsh compared to other convictions. Drug usage is often connected to prostitution, death, and crime, which is in the societal moral code automatically negative and raises the threshold to seek help even more (Ranta, 2020; Salasuo, 2004, p. 29).

These multiple challenges described above, can be understood as “wicked problems”. Wicked problem is a concept first introduced by Rittel and Webber in 1973 to explain the difficulties and tangled social issues people can face (Rittel & Webber, 1973, pp. 10–11). Wicked problems are described to have rarely simple solutions and they have interconnected nature of their causes and effects. Rittel and Webber (1973, pp. 11–23) classify ten main features of wicked problems. The difficulty of this concept is that the problems cannot be clearly defined or there are no straight forward solutions to them. With wicked problems, there often are no right or wrong answers to the way they are solved (Peters, 2017, p. 388; Rittel & Webber, 1973, pp. 11–23). Solutions to these problems can have irreversible consequences, and each attempt to address them may reveal new dimensions or trigger additional challenges. As heavy substance usage crosses with social, psychological, and economic factors, it can be seen to mirror many aspects of these wicked problems, especially in how possible solutions often can

create further complexities rather than resolving the underlying issues (Peters, 2017, pp. 385–386).

Vanjusov (2023, p. 21) points out that even though the public mind connects drug usage to marginalization and sees it as a minority problem, the actual barrier to recovery is the person itself and the used drug, not the societal or cultural structure. This can affect drug user's self-image in a way that prevents them from feeling worthy of help (Vanjusov, 2023, pp. 22, 184–185). As a trained professional artist with over a decade of experience as a photographer in the social work field especially with people in vulnerable life situations, I have gathered valuable insights and expertise from my experiences. Having dedicated the last few years to working with people in vulnerable life situations like homeless individuals with heavy substance use, I am very aware of the challenges they face when navigating and addressing these complexities in the societal and health system and substance treatment in Finland. Throughout my social street work and harm reduction approach, I have come to realize the importance of seeing these people as equal partners in decision-making processes, especially in decisions that closely affect them. It is not only important for achieving true societal equality but also for motivating people to actively engage in society around them and take meaningful actions towards it and have their voice heard.

My previous work experience with gang and foster youth, homeless people, and people having heavy substance use has provided me with profound understanding of their societal position. Despite legal provisions, it is apparent that these marginalized individuals are not granted the same rights as others. They carry the weight of stigma from their life situations that affects their experience of their humanity, influencing both how they are treated by others and how they perceive themselves (Partanen, 2002, pp. 18–19; Vanjusov, 2023, pp. 184–185).

When it comes to research practices involving this specific demographic, the significance of ethics and practical actions taken cannot be overseen. Often people using drugs are perceived as disinterested in their environment and its impact, possibly pushing them even more in the margin in various aspects of society and

its practices. Overlooking their vulnerability and ignoring their voices might cause a deeper stigma. However, by adopting an ethical approach and actively involving them in the research and project processes, these misconceptions can be challenged and encourage people to take control of their own narratives and possibly contribute positively to their own societal change.

By involving homeless people who have heavy substance use in the research process, the participative approach can empower them to share their perspectives, challenge the stigma they are facing, and reclaim their agency. These can be important steps in overcoming the feeling of isolation and marginalization they face (Partanen, 2002, pp. 18–19; Vanjusov, 2023, pp. 184–185). Participatory research can foster a sense of belonging and community, counteracting the disconnection that hinders access to services and support (Cacioppo & Hawkey, 2010, pp. 218–227; Vanjusov, 2023, p. 214). As Leavy (2017, p. 234) points out, participatory research is a power-sensitive form of research and can help to get the participants' voices truly heard.

This research aims to find responsive and ethical approaches that also hear the participant's voices in decision making. I explore strategies to shift individuals' perspectives from a self-centered focus to a more community-oriented mindset. As Vanjusov (2023, p.185) points out that the exclusion of the society can cause barriers to seek help and therefore if people feel more connected and can find a community, that might also lower the barrier for help seeking. In a big picture this research aims find possible solutions between ethical approach and participatory research with marginalized individuals and the societal issues they are facing.

2 Literature Review

In this chapter, I explain what other studies have been finding about the topics of exclusion (e.g., Granfelt, 1998, 2003, Norman & Pauly, 2013), loneliness (e.g., Bertham et al., 2020), homelessness, (e.g., Voutilainen, 2018) art (e.g., Lecklin, 2018) and ethics (e.g., Soulemanov et al., 2016) within a research process. I will look into the societal challenges faced by individuals actively using substances and experiencing homelessness and how these factors contribute to their feeling of disconnection from society. I will also examine the stigma and the ethics of working with this marginalized group of people. I discuss the challenges observed in participatory research and why, despite these challenges, engaging people in research remains crucial. I also discuss art as an approach in participatory research and how art can support social inclusion.

2.1 Societal Challenges Met by Substance Users and Homeless Individuals

Homelessness is a complex issue that extends beyond just lacking physical shelter. It depends on the country and culture what the definition of homelessness means. In Finland it is mainly connected to the lack of physical shelter (Granfelt, 1998, p. 48). Granfelt (1998, p. 48) explains that homelessness is a complex and ambiguous phenomenon that encompasses lack of security, permanence, and a place where individuals can feel safe and establish a sense of belonging. Homelessness is often defined on external factors, such as people not having an own home, sleeping in shelters, and spending their time on the streets (Granfelt, 1998, pp. 46–49; O’Sullivan, 2020, pp. 22–23). However, a more comprehensive understanding recognizes that homelessness also involves residential instability and precariousness in the labour market, which historically were seen as outcomes of individual deviancy or pathology (O’Sullivan, 2020, pp. 22–23). This broader perspective highlights the need for appropriate housing solutions that include necessary support systems that see and find solutions to the actual reason causing homelessness (O’Sullivan, 2020, pp. 22–23).

Moreover, the way homelessness is conceptualized and addressed varies significantly across different contexts and over time. The ETHOS (European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion) framework, for example, emphasizes the importance of considering various dimensions of homelessness. ETHOS stresses to include in the definition of homeless also those who are at risk of homelessness due to factors like institutional release without a home to return to, and those experiencing extreme housing instability (Busch-Geertsema, 2010, p. 25; Edgar et al., 2007, p. 68). Moore (2007, p. 146) points out that homelessness is not only a cause of one societal or structural issue. According to Moore (2007, p. 146) the problems such as low socio-economic status, substance use and mental health problems accumulate to the same people, causing complex problems adding on top of homelessness. Recognizing homelessness as a predictable outcome of these structural and systemic issues rather than random individual failures has profound implications for how societies respond to and address the needs of homeless populations (O'Sullivan, 2020, p. 101).

Finland introduced in 2008 the Housing First policy as a method aiming to decrease the long-term homelessness. The method was to provide housing and social services without the requirement of sobriety. This human rights-based approach was supported by partnerships between the state, cities, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations reduced the use of short-term shelters, converting them into affordable rental units (Voutilainen, 2018, pp. 175–182). According to Voutilainen (2018, p. 182), this approach led to the idea of looking at the people and their vulnerable life situation as separate from their behaviour.

When looking into the stigma the people experiencing homelessness carry, this is a very fundamentally important approach. As Granfelt (2003, p. 163) points out: homelessness is not a characteristic but a situational condition that should not categorize a person in any specific way (Granfelt, 2003, p. 163). But still there are societal burdens and a strong stigma that people experiencing homelessness carry.

In 2020, Bertham, Heinrich, Fröb, Wulff, Ondurshacka, Püschel, König and Hajek conducted a study of the feeling of loneliness among homeless people during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Hamburg. In their study they also analysed data that was collected from Spain, Australia and Canada. According to their analysis Bertham et al. (2021) say that there is an indication that homeless people were having a higher risk of feeling social isolation and loneliness even before the pandemic. The study shows that up to 39,6% of homeless people in Spain, Australia and Canada reported felt loneliness. To see how the pandemic affected the feeling of loneliness Bertham et al. (2021) analysed data that was collected in Hamburg in spring of 2020 from homeless people. In their study Bertham et al. (2021) stated that the social distancing used during the pandemic combined with the higher risk of loneliness, might have caused higher risk of physical and mental influences among the homeless people. Norman and Pauly (2013, p. 139) state in their study that individuals experiencing homelessness face more social exclusion compared to other people. The reason behind that are the systemic factors that deny them access to housing, income, and support. These factors might prevent them to participate as equals in society (Norman & Pauly, 2013, p. 139). Vanjusov (2023, p. 183) also pointed at this in her study and reminded that especially people with substance use are met with rejection in the societal system. Bertham et al. (2021) say in their study that the experience of social isolation among homeless people can be even deeper when having multiple problems like mental illness, distress and substance use. According to Bertham et al. (2021) these mentioned issues might prevent the individual from seeking help and deepen their experience of loneliness even more.

In the literature review study, Norman and Pauly (2013, pp. 136–148) highlight the importance of incorporating the perspectives of people experiencing homelessness into policy development. Bertham et al. (2021) stress the serious risk of the loneliness felt among the homeless people as it might cause the homeless people not seeking and finding help for their life situation. Norman and Pauly (2013, p. 141) describe homelessness as the most visible form of exclusion. When it persists, it can damage an individual's self-esteem, leading to marginalization and both short- and long-term health problems. Norman and Pauly (2013,

pp. 145–146) state that the stigma and experience of homelessness is so strong that the effects on peoples' health and well-being can remain with them even when they are housed. Due to the social isolation the people from vulnerable and stigmatized groups are more likely to experience loneliness compared to other people (Bertham et al., 2021).

2.2 Challenges in Participatory Research and Engagement of Communities

Nivala and Ryyänen (2019, p. 201) define participation as an action where the ability to influence is essential. They emphasize that while being heard is important, it alone does not define or ensure true participation (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2019, p. 201). In a research context, when discussing the participatory approach and methods used in community research, it is referred to as Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) (Leavy, 2017, p. 236). Banks, Armstrong, Carter, Graham, Hayward, Henry, and Strachan (2013, p. 264) define a community as a group of people who share one or several common characteristics, such as living in the same area or having a common identity or interest or visiting a common space. CBPR involves active participation from community stakeholders and is guided by values of shared power and resources, aiming for beneficial outcomes for all participants (Banks et al., 2013, p. 264).

Leavy (2017, p. 201) explains that the core of CBPR is always problem driven and the research setup is chosen to work around the problem. In participatory research, it is essential to adopt an approach that fosters dialogue and ensures individuals feel connected to the community (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2019, p. 201). The CBPR approach in research facilitates this by emphasizing collaboration as its core principle (Leavy, 2017, p. 237). Seale, Nind, Tilley and Chapman's (2015) article examine participatory research with people with learning disabilities, focusing on the concepts of space and boundaries. They explored how boundaries were crossed between different types of research and stakeholders, particularly in participatory data analysis and research involving people needing strong support. In their work Seale et al. (2015, p. 483) discuss the importance of opening

the boundaries of participatory research, taking the risk of ending up in so called messy spaces to develop the different participatory research methods.

Rättilä, Eriksson, Bettin and Honkatukia (2023, pp. 48–55) explore in their study the concept of participatory research and its implications, highlighting its potential for enhancing democracy and societal inclusion by involving citizens in scientific knowledge production. They argue that increasing public interest in science and providing opportunities for firsthand experience with research processes can promote critical thinking skills and scientific literacy among participants, ultimately influencing their perceptions of science and society. Leavy (2017, p. 238) underlines that the power imbalance between the different parties is always a high risk, therefore it is crucial to ensure the participation benefits all parties. The benefits can be physical but also immaterial as described in Rättilä et al. (2023, pp. 48–55) work.

CBPR design requires flexibility and innovation as it integrates diverse resources and viewpoints to address problems, necessitating adaptation when plans go awry (Leavy, 2017, pp. 241–242). In CBPR it is vital to acknowledge the creative respond to the inherent complexities and tensions, rather than idealizing the process, to push and extend boundaries effectively (Seale, Nind, Tilley, and Chapman, 2015, p. 495). Rättilä et al. (2023, p. 55) believe that participatory research offers individuals outside the researcher pool the opportunity to influence the important institution of democracy, namely the production of scientific knowledge, and to experience societal inclusion in this way. The researchers argue that the participation of not-research based people in the production of research-based knowledge is important so that they see how their contribution becomes part of a broader knowledge framework. Participating in research might also influence how citizens perceive science and society more generally (Rättilä et al., 2023, p. 55).

The dialogue between the community and the researcher is important. Leavy (2017, p. 241) talks about the insider-outsider setup that is always present in the CBPR setting. The more the researcher gives space and values the creative outcome in the process and allows the dialogue shift also in an unplanned space

and situation, the greater is the possibility of the researcher gaining the community's trust (Leavy, 2017 p. 241; Seale et al. 2015, p. 495). Things might change in a rapid pace and that needs flexibility and a problem-solving attitude as well as a wide culturally sensitive approach towards the community where the CBPR is conducted (Leavy, 2017, pp. 238, 241–242). In their article Rättilä et al. (2023, pp. 57–58) highlight that a well-functioning research group implements dialogic, lively, and situational research ethics, drawing from empathy, care, and compassion. The prerequisite for a diverse research group is a safe atmosphere and good team spirit, supporting functionality and the expression of creativity among group members. When trust prevails, group members dare to express their thoughts and be themselves (Rättilä et al., 2023 p. 58). Level of participation in the whole research process vary widely in the field of participatory research. Because of its extensive nature, the wide-ranging involvement and the absence of recognition and gratitude have caused numerous co-researchers to perceive their engagement in the research project as mainly surface-level or confined to mere formalities (Rättilä et al., 2023, p. 63).

Rättilä et al. (2023, p. 67) argue that in participatory research, it is crucial to consider and identify the elements of collaboration that promote positive experiences of inclusion. The goal should not be to avoid or downplay negative participation experiences, but researchers must also acknowledge that the experience of inclusion can vary individually. The significance of co-researchers' experiences of inclusion raise ethical questions and underscores the need to reflect on these factors from the outset of the process and to regularly discuss them with co-researchers (Rättilä et al., 2023, p. 63).

As Leavy (2017, p. 237) stated in CBPR the power and its balance between the researcher and the community becomes a crucial tool that needs careful consideration and adjustment. The power needs to be shared and Banks et al. (2013, p. 266) remind that within that process there is always a case of ethics involved. What is seen as right and wrong, and what tools are used to adjust the power balance, and what are the harms and benefits of it all, might become a tricky question of ethical consideration (Banks et al., 2013, p. 266).

Souleymanov, Kuzmanovic, Marshall, Sheim, Mikiki, Worthington and Millson did in 2016 a study to find what kind of ethical issues might be found when conducting community-based research with people using drugs. In their study Souleymanov et al. (2016) noted that there are certain parts that need more ethical consideration when working with people using drugs. According to Soulemanov et al. (2016) the choices made for example about compensation paid for participants and inclusion should be considered carefully from their ethical side especially when working with people using drugs (Soulemanov et al., 2016). Soulemanov et al. (2016) stress in their conclusion that excluding people from research based on their drug use, is unethical and such decision should be considered carefully.

Rättilä et al. (2023, p. 69) state that the significance of co-researchers' participation and its ethical aspects pose challenges for professional researchers. The goal is to ensure that participation is perceived positively, although it may not be possible for everyone. Achieving participation in research can be complex, and the work towards a good democratic way to make it must be continued (Rättilä et al., 2023, p. 69).

2.3 Creativity Based Approaches in Participatory Research

My master's thesis project aims to make the participants feel more included and give them a possibility to tell how they see the society around them. Our project was to create community art piece out of a cupboard. We approached the theme of "Society and belonging" with different creative activities. Leavy (2017, p. 191) talks about Art-Based Research (ABR) as a creative way of finding information. She also reminds that the ABR approach is open to surprise and cannot be fully planned ahead, but it needs an open attitude that is ready for unexpected situations (Leavy, 2017, pp. 191, 219). Even when there is a plan, the process might be completely different from the plan (Leavy, 2017, p. 191).

Hackett (2020, p. 27) states in his article: "Creativity and artistic ability knows no boundaries, it is innately human and knows no age, class, background, or education." It can be seen that art and creativity are a concrete way to include people,

no matter of their background. Söderlund (2023) worked with homeless people and participatory photography in her dissertation, and she states that essential in participatory activities is that the starting point is not teaching, but rather subject-oriented collaboration, where participation is initiated by the actor themselves as autonomous and genuinely voluntary engagement in authentic involvement (Söderlund, 2023, p. 79). Also, Lecklin (2018, p. 127) has done numerous art pieces with different communities and states that there is always some sort of personal motivation behind the participation.

So even when the researcher has a plan how to execute a project, in ARB it is crucial to remember that creative methods always open the door to unexpected outcomes (Leavy, 2017, p. 191). Lecklin (2018, pp. 126–127) asks the researcher to always consider what the participants get out of the process. She also states that one reason to participate might also be the desire to feel included and to belong to a community (Lecklin, 2018, p. 127). These reasons are equally important to the aim of wanting to create art. Laitinen (2017) claims in her article for Sitra that art has the potential to bring positive changes in an individual's self-esteem, sense of belonging, and feelings of inclusion. It has been observed to enhance self-awareness, self-worth, and self-confidence while reducing social exclusion and supporting social engagement and participation. Art offers opportunities for corrective and empowering experiences, altering negative perceptions, or limiting beliefs about oneself and embracing new roles and identities (Laitinen, 2017).

Peek, Tobin-Gurley, Cox, Scannell, Fletcher, and Heykoop (2016, p. 89) researched in The Youth Creating Disaster Recovery & Resilience (YCDR2) initiative the recovery and resilience of disaster-affected youth aged 13 to 22 in communities in the U.S. and Canada. Through experiential and arts-based workshops, the study examined the factors that helped or hindered these young people in their recovery process after major disasters. Peek et al. (2016, p. 106) claim that the creative process was the key for the youth to be able to express themselves in a multi-level way. But as Lecklin (2018, pp. 126–127) reminded, we need to remember that there is always a subjective motivation to participate. It

might be the creative approach that invites the participants to join, but Peek et al. (2018, p.106) remind in their study that it is equally possible that certain people also did not join, because of the creative based approach.

Leavy (2017, p. 219) states that ARB is valuable approach for themes and topics that might be hard to discuss. Creativity can provide a wider range of viewpoints than a verbal interview. But on the downside, the ABR can never be completely planned ahead, and the process will likely be messy (Leavy, 2017, p. 191).

3 Conceptual Framework

In this chapter, I present the conceptual framework that underpins this study, focusing on the ethical and practical considerations essential when conducting participatory research with people who use drugs. Ethics serve as the core of this study and therefore also for this framework, guiding every aspect of this research process. Sociocultural animation (e.g., Kurki, 2002, pp. 127–128)) fosters active participation, community engagement, and creative interaction, empowering individuals to express their needs and experiences while nurturing a sense of belonging. Simultaneously, qualified empathy (e.g., Gredes & Segal, 2009, p. 115; Keefe, 2024, p. 2; Raatikainen, Rauhala & Mäenpää, 2022) ensures that researchers can understand participants' lived experiences deeply while maintaining necessary professional boundaries. The sense of belonging (e.g., Nivala & Ryyänen, p. 141) is a crucial part of developing a community where people feel safe to have active interaction. All these concepts are important when creating ethical approach in research that prioritizes the well-being of participants and fosters a supportive environment for dialogue and collaboration.

3.1 Building Trust: Ethical Aspects for Engaging People

Ethics are the core of research, especially when researching people. Ethics is part of people's existence, culture and day-to-day decision making. People base their choices, big or small, often on an ethical ground. Kuula (2011, p. 21) defines ethical thinking as an ability to think and reflect the right or wrong doings in personal and communal life situations. Ethical thinking is often present when a person weighs their standpoint towards other people's choices (Kuula, 2022, p. 21).

When starting a research process, ethics of the research must be carefully reflected, especially situationally, as they can affect the participants in ways that may not first be understood. It is crucial to make careful background research to know the subject, before beginning the work (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 118). Certain subjects are commonly considered as vulnerable. For the re-

search to be ethical, it is crucial to consider what part of the research is vulnerable. Is it the information that is gathered or are the people who is being researched and worked with in a vulnerable life situation (Kallinen, Pirskainen & Rautio, 2018, p. 17). As we are working with human minds and people tend to react to different situations in different ways, all interpreting life based on their own experiences, it is good to remember that sensitivity is also a very subjective matter. For example, crime, sexuality, violence and substance use are considered as sensitive subjects (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 16), which makes the people around those subjects vulnerable. However, Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio (2018, p. 16) remind that different subjects can be sensitive for one and not at all for the other one. Cultural and situational factors often define the way how people feel about exposing personal matters (Kuula, 2011, p. 136).

When researching sensitive subjects, whether the sensitive part is the people, topic or the data collected or generated, it can mean the researcher is in contact with people whose life situation is very vulnerable. Granfelt (1998, p. 41) states that there are often some ethical borderlines in research processes, but with careful preparation and honest approach the researcher can avoid exploitation. Granfelt (1998, p. 41) also reminds that it is important that researchers give the people themselves the power and right to decide, what they want to tell about their lives and what they consider to be too sensitive to share.

Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio (2018, p. 195) mention that it is crucial that also the silent or otherwise marginalized groups have an opportunity to tell their narratives and to bring their experiences and reality into public conversation. In and through this study, I propose that if researchers are too considerable and begin to censor topics and subjects based only on the idea that people in vulnerable life situations cannot be participated into research because of the risk of exploitation, we are again also throwing the shadow of stigma over them.

When doing participatory research with people in a vulnerable life situation, the ethical approach is vital in the interaction between the researcher and participant. The personality, situations, place, and time have all an impact how the interaction

flows. Consequently, it is never indifferent from what point of view the researcher approaches the participants (Granfelt, 2009, p. 146). Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio (2018, p. 45) note that it is also good to acknowledge that verbal communication is not the easiest or right one for everyone. Therefore, it is also essential to consider other methods, like creative, participatory, or visual, to gather information and data. People might not be able to verbalize their feelings, meaning it is vital to also note their non-verbal communication like crying, silence, or agitation (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio. 2018, p. 45).

The space where the research is happening, whether it is an interview, questionnaire or, for example, a creative project, is central. Safety plays a great role in the lives of people in vulnerable life situations, and for that reason it is important to choose an environment for the research where the participants can feel safe (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, pp. 117, 135). Choosing a research topic that involves people in vulnerable life situations, whether it is their narratives, their actions or the approach that is being researched, will arouse emotions in both, the researcher and the participants and it is essential to be prepared for them (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio 2018, p. 184). Leavy (2017, p. 191) points out that the research always involves unpredictable situations and emotions and rarely goes as planned. Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio (2018, p. 189) call research a process and within that process it is crucial to understand the ethical approach. Each process is always unique, and the process requires sensitivity, lots of ethical reflection and directness from the researcher (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 189).

To ensure the ethical reflection to be honest and the research's viewpoint in favour of the participants it is crucial to create an honest and ethical relationship between the participants and researcher. In a creative approach setting this means the researcher must also take an active role as a so called animator and activate the participants towards the creative activity.

3.2 Community Interaction and Ethical Engagement with Sociocultural Animation and Empathy

Sociocultural animation emerged initially as a response to societal crises after the World War II in France (Kurki, 2000, p. 11). Sociocultural animation was used as a tool to restore democratic values and motivate the working class to return to studying after the war, during a time when depression was taking hold. In this study and context animation refers to a tool that helps professionals to engage participants in activities. Using sociocultural animation as a tool means approaching participants with motivational and supportive way. Motivational approach includes sensitive but encouraging speech and social creativity (Kurki, 2000, p. 11). Animation as a profession established its position in the 1960. The exact definition and its tasks have varied depending on the prevalent sociological currents. It has been used as approach tool to enable social communication, strengthen the interaction, help people with learning, enable freedom and many other things. However, the core of sociocultural animation has always been pedagogical awareness, participation, and social creativity (Kurki, 2000, p.11). Sociocultural animation promotes pedagogical awareness and social creativity, providing platforms for individuals to express their needs and engage with others to work toward common goals (Kurki, 2000, pp. 88–91).

Sociocultural animation emphasizes the power of imagination, creativity, and active participation to address and remediate social issues (Kurki, 2002, pp. 127–128). It aims to achieve a change in the current reality that empowers the participants' quality of life using continuous interaction and creativity (Marrengula, 2010, p. 72; Nivala & Rynänen, 2019, p. 205). Animation aims to community development, its main function is building a platform for people to find each other and come together by using existing social structures (Nivala & Rynänen, 2019, p. 205).

For sociocultural animation, as a platform of activity, to succeed, it requires the establishment of a communal dialogue. Sensitivity and motivation are crucial for both, animator, and participants. A professional animator's fundamental skill is

the ability to sensitize people (Kurki, 2000, p. 133). The goal is to promote people's organization and the emergence of sociocultural activities, facilitating learning through doing and experiencing. Kurki (2000, pp. 136, 147) highlights that it is vital that these activities are inclusive, not excluding anyone.

While sociocultural animation fosters interaction and creativity, qualified empathy can serve as a vital tool for building ethical and professional relationships between social workers, researchers, and participants. In social work and participatory research, empathy is crucial for understanding and responding to individuals' needs that they can come across during the process. Gerdes and Segal (2009, p. 114) point out the importance of empathy in social work. When working with people in the social work setting, having ongoing interaction with them, we need to be able to also feel empathy. Keefe (2024, p. 2) describes empathy being a process that involves our own history and experiences, it is a reflex response that also includes sympathy and our personal feelings. Gerdes and Segal (2009, p. 115) also state that it is generally agreed that empathy means being able to feel what the other person feels and might think.

Nivala and Ryyänen (2029, p. 190) talk about the importance how the professional agent positions themselves in relation to the client. Keefe (2024, p. 6) reminds us that in interaction with others, we always interpret, and we might do that based on our own experiences, prejudices, and knowledge. Without a trained mind, this might be strongly influenced by our own mood, the circumstances, and previous outcomes on similar situations. In a professional setting it is vital to always see the person as an individual, human. A social work professional seeks to find answers to those questions that the client wants to have solved and help them to find their own possibilities and resources to overcome the difficulties. According to Nivala and Ryyänen (2019, p. 191) this needs empathy and the ability to see the person behind the problems.

For the above-mentioned setting to be able to happen, without overloading and helping the social worker from getting deeply entangled in their own emotional

context, we need so called qualified empathy. Qualified empathy refers to a professional's ability to use precise and purposeful empathy when interacting with clients (Raatikainen, Rauhala & Mäenpää, 2022). Qualified empathy is not limited to social pedagogy; it also encompasses eco-social approaches, fostering a broader awareness of diversity and societal well-being. It moves away from a narrow casework focus, engaging professionals with diverse individuals facing complex situations in various contexts (Raatikainen, Rauhala & Mäenpää, 2022). Developing empathic skills follows a progression: From emotional reactions to cultivating empathic responses. From understanding to actively engaging in empathic actions. From the client-based interaction to a more wide-ranging approach that also includes the interaction with colleagues. This learning process requires time and space for effective growth (Raatikainen, Rauhala & Mäenpää, 2022).

In participatory research the combination of sociocultural animation and qualified empathy allow an effective methodology to approach people in vulnerable life situations. Sociocultural animation is a dynamic process that is designed to be a dialectical and awaken person's creativity and sensitivity. The process happens between people and structures, highlighting the importance of interactive networks and platforms (Kurki, 2000, pp. 88–91; Marrengula, 2010, p. 68). Sociocultural animation's emphasis on creative interaction and social platforms are improved when qualified empathy is applied to maintain the ethical integrity of these engagements. By actively involving participants in a non-hierarchical manner, sociocultural animation fosters empowerment and personal responsibility (Kurki, 2002, pp. 129–130). At the same time, qualified empathy ensures that the researcher or social worker leading the engagement act can connect even deeply with participants, understanding their lived experiences without crossing professional boundaries (Raatikainen, Rauhala & Mäenpää, 2022).

Based on the literature review in this chapter it can be stated that sociocultural animation and qualified empathy can be essential tools for ethical engagement and fostering meaningful and ethical interactions within participatory research. Sociocultural animation promotes community development through creativity and

collective action, while qualified empathy ensures that professionals engage ethically and maintain the emotional distance necessary to guide participants toward positive change. Together, these approaches create a supportive, empowering environment that allows marginalized individuals to find their voices, build trust, and work toward shared goals.

3.3 Participation and the Sense of Belonging in Addressing Social Wicked Problems

Research shows that homeless people are often not seen and taken as equal human being (Harris & Fiske, 2010, pp. 848–849). The basic need is still there. Nivala & Ryyänänen (2018, p. 142) state that the feeling of not belonging can cause depression, anxiety, and hopelessness. Freire (1970, p. 80) argues in his book “Pedagogy of the oppressed” that to be seen is a dialogue. Dialogue is a necessary part of human existence. It arises from the connection between people and is the way in which individuals find meaning as human beings. When a person is heard, they find their significance. They are worth listening to, unique, and important precisely because of their own, unique thoughts and feelings. Simply put; they exist (Freire, 1970, p. 88).

The sense of belonging is an outcome of successful interaction, safety and appreciated existence. To form the sense of belonging it needs the person’s experience of being valued and accepted in the surrounding they is acting (Nivala & Ryyänänen, p. 141). To feel accepted means also to be free of control in the ways a person exists, is it then the language, personality, or lifestyle. Freire (1970, p. 88) explains that meaningful conversation is impossible between those seeking to control language and those resisting such control. It is a clash between those denying others the right to speak and those who’s right to speak has been taken away. To address this dehumanizing aggression, those who have lost their speaking rights must reclaim them. Equal conversations require humility. If we always assume others are ignorant and never acknowledge our own ignorance, or if we see ourselves as entirely different from others and cannot recognize their perspectives, then meaningful dialogue becomes difficult (Freire, 1970, p. 90). This also blocks the interaction that is needed to form sense of belonging.

Nivala and Ryyänen (2018, p. 141) remind that the sense of belonging is not a statistic mindset. The intensity of the feeling varies depending on time and place. According to Freire (1970, p. 109) people, in their specific situations, are shaped by and shape their surroundings. People think about their own circumstances more when faced with challenges that require them to take action. Existence is tied to the individual's situation, and a person becomes more aware of it when making critical actions (Freire, 1970, p. 109). Nivala and Ryyänen (2018, p.142) explain belonging being sometimes only made visible when something disturbs it, or it is taken away. In this viewpoint it is important in a research environment to build circumstances that not only might create the feelings of belonging, but also ensure that they are not lost afterwards.

In this study, participation is not only a form to generate data but also an important aspect of the research process and the study itself. By actively involving participants, the research design ensures that the voices and perspectives of all participants are heard. Without successful and collaborative participation and interaction within the participation the study would lack an important and nuanced understanding of the phenomena that this study investigates. The researcher's role in this participatory study is not to be a bystander, but to engage and facilitate a communal interaction between the participants and themselves. This framework ensures this approach to happen in an ethical and practical way.

4 Implementation of the Study

In this chapter I will explain my research task and question and describe how I am carrying out the study. I will describe the methodological starting points for the study, and methods I used for data generation and analysis. In this chapter I will also explain how the ethical considerations and data management plan are integral to achieving the study's objectives. They ensure that the research is conducted in a manner that respects and protects participants in marginalized communities.

4.1 Research Task and Question

In this research I explore strategies aimed at shifting homeless individuals' thoughts and perspectives (especially those who have a strong substance addiction) from an individual-centered perspective to a more community-oriented one. I use creativity-based participatory research approach, recognizing the transformative power of creative expression in fostering connection and giving a possibility to enable information that would be hard to get with traditional qualitative research methods. As part of this research process, I worked with a group of homeless people with heavy substance use and we created a piece of art using creativity-based approaches. The process was implemented and documented with participatory data generation methods.

My research question is: What kinds of practical and ethical aspects need to be considered when conducting creativity-based participatory research with homeless people with heavy substance use?

This research is an exploration of participatory research methods; it is about understanding the practical and ethical considerations and possible challenges essential to consider in conducting creativity-based participatory research with homeless people using drugs. I aim to address topics such as the challenges of engaging homeless individuals with substance use in participatory research; ensuring that participants' voices are heard, and their experiences respected during

the research process; and striking a balance between ethical considerations and the practicalities of the research process.

4.2 Research Methodology

This empirical, qualitative research project took place in collaboration with a low threshold place for homeless people. People frequently using low-threshold facility, designed for homeless individuals dealing with active substance use issues, participated my project. The result of various creativity-based workshops was an art piece in form of a cupboard, displayed within the low-threshold space. The methodology I used in this research is built around creativity-based participatory approach (Leavy, 2017, pp. 224–253). It involves the facilitation of four creative workshops, that aimed to explore the concepts and participants' thoughts of societal inclusion and exclusion.

This research created a platform for the participants to share their personal stories through dialogue and creative expression. Narrative approach for the data generation in this study was essential for generating knowledge. To understand the ethical and practical challenges in participatory research with people using drugs it is essential to be able to see the perspective of the participants. Story-telling is a way to engage the audience in this experience and make the participants' voices heard (Kohler Riessmann, 2008, p. 15). In this study the narrative approach was not only to a data generation method but also a framework for ethical knowledge creation and community engagement. Kohler Riessman (2008, p. 14) points out that to hear real experiences, people need to be allowed to tell their stories.

Leavy (2008, p. 237) states that visual art can function both as a medium for passing on ideology and as a powerful tool for challenging and transforming belief systems and stereotypes. This aligns with my choice of a creativity-based participatory approach grounded in Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), which emphasizes ethical and practical considerations. Cultural sensitivity and the ability to foster community engagement is a core part of CBPR, therefore the

use of that approach with people in a vulnerable position, like people using drugs, is relevant. Leavy (2017, p. 238) notes that collaboration is important to ensure the research is culturally sensitive. Leavy (2017, p. 238) also reminds to extend the sensitivity to selecting the interventions and strategies that are most effective for the specific population involved in the research. Working with people using drugs requires sensitivity and a good understanding of their life situations, experiences, values, and cultural norms they live in, to build trust. Without trust it is difficult to engage people to participate in a research process. With CBPR approach combined to my professional sensitivity I could ensure the research was relevant, ethical, and respectful towards the participants.

CBPR also works towards driving social action and promote social justice (Leavy, 2017, p. 240). My research seeks to address the ethical and practical considerations of working with people using drugs. The social action and social justice conducted in this study align with the objectives of this research. In addition to respecting the participants' experiences, the narrative approach also aligns with the social justice goals of CBPR. Taking into consideration the nature of the life situations of the people I worked in this study, I wanted to use an approach that would facilitate knowledge exchange within the community. Banks et al. (2013, pp. 263–264) state in their research that CBPR is an approach that mobilizes the local knowledge of people. The creativity-based approach and sociocultural animation are based on partly same reasoning: I wanted to foster engagement and a deeper insight into the research topic. Using creative methods gives the participants a way to express themselves in ways that only interviews would possibly not be able to do, providing possibly richer and more nuanced data of the research topic.

Vanjusov (2023, p. 185) emphasizes that the people using drugs are deeply lacking the feeling being included and having a fear not to be heard. The sociocultural animation and creative-based approaches are methods where this feeling of exclusion can be tackled and give the participants a valued feeling of being part of the research process. Vanjusov (2023, pp.184-185) explains how people using drugs are feeling exclusion of the society and think that they do not deserve help. When being able to shift this individual-centered thinking that might only focus on

the individual's own position and the feeling of stigma to a more community oriented one, it might cause also the stigma to fade and the lower the help seeking. When feeling connected to something, the person can relate and find strength in the community.

As the process in this study involved a significant amount of combining participants' personal experiences and reflecting them in ethical practices, it was important to be aware of the autoethnographic perspective. Wall (2008) explains autoethnography to be a way of connecting the personal experiences to a wider cultural and social understanding. According to Leavy (2017, p. 144) autoethnography is a research method in which the researcher takes into consideration their personal experiences with the topic to reflect on and illuminate the themes emerging from the study. It allows for a personal and possibly deeper exploration of the specific culture through the lens of the researcher's own experiences (Leavy, 2017, p. 144).

CBPR means establishing research partnerships with community members to address a specific issue identified by the community (Leavy 2017, p. 224). CBPR approach needs collaboration, sharing power, and integrating various forms of knowledge to succeed. Projects that involve CBPR are usually initiated from the grassroots level, involving those most affected by the issue, aiming to bring about necessary changes. Methodologically, CBPR adopts problem-centred approaches, requiring flexibility, and is often employed to drive community change or action, while also simultaneously serving exploratory, descriptive, evaluative, evocative, and unsettling purposes (Leavy, 2017, p. 224). Banks et al. (2012, p. 263) note that many ethical issues are common for any type of research that involves social aspects. Informed consent, anonymity and the ownership of findings must be considered in other social research processes too (Banks et al., 2012, p. 263). To ensure that the participants would engage and form a community, as according to Kurki (2000, p.129) sociocultural animation requires to work, the four workshops were scheduled to span on a two-week period around the same time.

4.3 Data Generation

The data generation included the facilitation of the workshops, the workshop journal that included the verbal data produced during the workshops, and the observations I made during the activities, and the recorded semi-constructed interviews and ethical journal. The recruitment of participants for the workshops involved two visits to the venue before the actual workshop. During the first visit that took place several weeks before the beginning of the workshops, I discussed the project, its ethics, and practicalities with the representatives from the non-governmental organization. A mutual agreement was established on holding the workshop in the open hall of the venue to lower the threshold to participate. During this visit I engaged with the people using drugs spending time at the venue, building familiarity and interest towards the project.

On the second visit, that took place a week before the first workshop, I began the first steps of sociocultural animation by including possible participants into a discussion of the theme of the upcoming art project (Kurki, 2000, pp. 88–89). The topic-ideas of “home” and “society” were discussed in these early conversations.

The artistic approaches and methods used in the workshops were previously piloted in my workplace with individuals experiencing similar socio-economic and addiction challenges in their lives as the individuals I did the research with. For the creativity-based approach I used methods of painting with the mosaic technique and free hand, and salt dough work, including plants. Engaging the participants needs the act of animating, which begins by sensitizing and motivating the participants to join the action (Kurki, 2000, p. 133). Vanjusov (2023, p.185) points out the people using drugs struggle with deep trust issues and might have strong experiences of exclusion. This means the action needs to be very easy to approach and join. Based on these factors I chose painting with the mosaic technique as it does not require significant technical skills from the participants. It is enough to be able to place tape and dab colour onto the material's surface. The result is still controlled and neat, lowering the threshold for participation. However, I also kept the option open for freehand painting in the workshops, allowing those

with better skills in that area to express themselves in that way giving them the motivation to join.

Modelling with clay or any other material is calming. As sensory sensitivity also works through the hands was moulding the salt dough a grounding experience. In the workshops, the possibility to focus on the moulding process enabled interaction and discussion. As Nivala and Ryyänen (2019, p. 206) suggest, a space where participants feel secure enough to share their personal narratives can be formed through these carefully chosen actions that involve and engage.

Including plants as part of the artwork was also a conscious choice. Plants require care; they are living entities and can be seen as a symbol of life's continuity. In sociocultural animation, the animator's role is to fade during the process (Kurki, 2000, p. 136; Nivala & Ryyänen, 2019, p. 206). By leaving a part of the artwork in a state that needs further attention from the participants, I wanted to build a possibility for the participants to stay involved with the community they built during the project even when I was not around anymore. I brought curated materials, such as selected colours of paint, selected plants, to all workshops to ensure the project stayed professionally managed. I believe this was important for the result to be harmonious in terms of colour palette and aesthetic matters. Participants still had the freedom to choose their colours, plants, and shaping their pots and other objects from the available selection.

The project began on the first workshop day with setup of the cupboard and arranging all materials with easy access to optimize the low threshold for participation (Kurki, 2000, p. 133; Vanjusov, 2023, p.185). To ensure the ethic approach I took time to explain carefully to the participants the research and its purpose and having participants sign consent forms, we discussed the theme of the project and artwork (Banks et al., 2012, p. 263). As discussed during the visits beforehand, I suggested it to be the theme of society and belonging. The painting began with mapping out the cupboard with tape to represent society's various forms. We discussed the participants thoughts of their societal standpoints as a starting point to the discussion how they see the society and communities around them (Leavy

2017, p. 224). Painting started shortly after that, other using dapping technique and other painting freehand. The atmosphere was relaxed as five participants contributed to the project and discussions for over three hours. During the end of the workshop there were two situations, where participant or outsider of the workshop caused a tensed situation that needed negotiation. These situations were brief, and we were able to continue the work after them.

The second workshop was held five days after the first one. We continued the painting, as it was not finished during the first session. We had two new participants joining us. The participation was engaged, and the people worked even more freely and collaboratively as in the first session. Markable was the way they continued each other's paintings without hesitation, finding clear joy in sharing the work. I took the participants three and half hour on the second day to complete the painting of the whole cupboard.

Third day of workshop included new material as we worked with salt dough. We created plant pots with the theme of home and belonging. Engaging to this was enthusiastic and the salt dough as a material very liked. We discussed what makes a good home and the participants raised the idea of making homes for the plants in this project. The discussions and interaction were vivid and joyful during this workshop. The salt dough worked as a material very well, even with people who had swollen hands and difficulties with fine motor skills. The form of work grounded the people and clearly created a safe space for them to discuss freely (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2019, p. 206). The pots for all plants were completed and the participants even had time to make some decorative objects within the time of three hours. The day's creations were left to dry for the next and final session.

In our fourth and final workshop, the participants painted the pots and decorative objects made in the previous session. Some of the pots remained unpainted, as that was a clear wish from one participant. Payday of the benefits affected the attendance, that was lower than in the other workshops. Payday means the day each month, when social benefits are paid out in Finland. This is always the same date and on that date all the social benefits are paid to the bank accounts. Getting

money, can mean people with heavy substance use are somewhere using the monthly paid money and their attendance to common activities is low. But the ones who participated on this day, made a good effort in painting all the pots and helping me install the lights in the cupboard and at the end arrange the cupboard to its final perfection. The finalized cupboard was a piece of installation art, that included lights, plants, and painted surfaces. The final arrangement of the work was fully made by the participants as they took ownership over the project. My role was to be on the sociocultural animator that vanishes at the end (Nivala & Rynänen, 2019, p. 206; Kurki, 2000, p. 136). The final workshop took four hours and ended with group reflection on the nature of the project and participation. The participants expressed pride and joy in the work they had accomplished together and shared a communal wish for wishing the working had lasted longer.

During the first, third and fourth workshops I recorded semi-structured group discussions that were held while the participants were undertaking the creative work. I prepared some topics that I wanted to discuss, more as a conversation opener than a strict guideline. The topics were: society, feeling of belonging, participation, and engagement. My decision to use semi-structured interviews for the data generation was based on the possibility to combine structured institutional and casual conversation. Considering the background and vulnerable life situation of the participants and their possible traumas with very structured interviews, this approach was particularly suitable for this study. This approach allowed a balance between the official interview and naturally flowing dialog.

Semi-structured interviews provide a possibility to examine the actions the participants perform next to what they say during the interview (Junnier, 2024). This approach also gives the researcher a possibility dive deeper into the directions the conversation naturally starts to flow. The approach gives therefore a possibility to gain deeper insight of the topic and the thoughts and motivation of the participants. It also empathizes the systematic flow of conversations that is built on a core that ensures that the conversations stay on track, but still has the freedom to wander into deeper levels (Magaldi & Berler, 2020, pp. 4825–4827). Magaldi

and Berler (2020) state that this dual competence makes semi-structured discussions a good method for topics like participants' thoughts and perspectives about society and their role in it.

Using the semi-structured conversation within this study, enabled the participants to engage in the conversation during the workshop time, while also focusing on the creative activities. The approach lowered the threshold to speak and take part in a possibly serious sounding research interview. It also encouraged open conversation and made them feel easy to join the discussion. I aimed to create an open and flexible space for participants to share their perspectives freely. As Flick (2022, p. 174) notes, the goal of interviewing is to get as close as possible to the participants viewpoint of chosen topic. The semi-structured format encouraged dialogue allowing participants to express themselves in their own chosen terms, without being limited by given options of answers. Semi-structured discussions allow for open ended questions. This possibility lowers the threshold to answer the questions, as the answer can be based on the experiences and knowledge the participants have from their own life (Flick, 2023, p. 211). This kind of approach was valuable with the group of people I did my study, as it ensured their voices could be heard and their responses were not restricted or guided by my own assumptions.

The recorded semi-structured discussions focused on the theme of society and the feeling of belonging and participation. These discussions aimed to give a voice to the participants how they see their roles within the Finnish society. The narrative format, i.e. the way the interviews were conducted in a conversational format during the activities, encouraged dialogue, allowing participants to express themselves without being restricted by predefined categories.

In the first discussion, that was recorded during the first workshop, the participants shared their thoughts on the significance of belonging and their experiences with participation and engagement within Finnish community. Some frustration regarding the governmental policies were discussed especially criticizing the allocation of resources for low-income individuals. The discussion included

reflection on societal structures and the feeling of neglect of marginalized groups. Participants discussed the theme of stigma that is associated with heavy drug use and how societal norms often label individuals. They shared their personal experiences of using drugs as a coping mechanism for all the feelings, financial struggles and problems finding stable employment. The strong difference between the societal expectations and individuals' realities were also mentioned.

As the discussion progressed some participants got involved in the discussion with quite big feelings and they clearly felt overwhelmed by the topics and got visibly upset. This had an impact on the group and the rest of the participants went quiet and less engaged. As I recognized this shift happening, I turned off the recording.

The second recorded semi-structured interview took place during the third workshop. The themes for this discussion were community, belonging and the challenges faced by individuals using drugs within societal structures. Early in the discussion one participant noted the importance of communal activities and how they foster feelings of connection support among peers. However, this recorded discussion was very short, ending after 8,5 minutes. At this point one participant expressed a strong wish to stop the recording. They expressed the uncomfortable feeling and not being able to concentrate due to the fact of being recorded. This reflection on the need of security in sharing personal experiences and feeling safe to continue the participation in the workshop made me first halt the recording and shortly after that stop it for the day. I wanted to respect the participants' feelings and maintain a supportive environment for open dialogue.

The third recorded discussion took place on the last workshop day. The third recording also ended prematurely, as the two previous ones. In this third recording session the participants clearly appeared reluctant to speak openly while the recorder was active, and this made me turn off the recorder. There was a general reluctance to speak while being recorded, indicating discomfort with the documentation process. Although some informal exchanges occurred, the participants

did not engage into meaningful or structured discussions, highlighting the challenges of creating an open environment for dialogue with this group of individuals.

During the workshops I maintained a detailed workshop diary (Appendix 4). I made field notes during the workshop days, documenting observations and reflections. I made these notes during the workshop days, observing participants behaviour, atmosphere and writing down actions and discussions. As Flick (2023, p. 313) points out, field notes should ideally be made right on spot or immediately after the observation is done, to ensure the accuracy and the nuances of the observation.

Throughout the workshops, the narrative process was visible not only in the content of the conversations but also in the way the participants engaged with the creative activities. The act of painting and creating objects from salt dough during the workshops became part of the storytelling process. Kohler Riessman (2008, p. 15) notes that narratives are not just verbal; they are also social and embodied, involving a sequence of actions that create meaning for both the narrator and the audience.

As Flick (2023, p. 314) points out the production of reality and the narratives in the form of text, begins already when making notes of the workshops. Leavy (2017, p. 134) also stresses the participatory observation to include systematic notetaking while participating in the activities. Therefore, I found it highly important to carry my workshop diary with me during the workshop days and make chronological notes that constructed the whole flow of the day almost hour by hour. Leavy (2017, p.135) explains that the level of participation can vary from non-participatory to fully participatory. During my research and workshops, I used full participation during the workshops, giving the participants an example and immersing myself from time to time in the creative activities alongside the participants. However, during the semi-structured discussions, I took a more guiding role, facilitating the discussions without directly participating in the responses or sharing my own experiences.

Flick (2023, p. 289) describes participant observation to involve the balancing active engagement with maintaining an observational position. Being part of the activities allowed me a deeper insight in the dynamics of the group, but it also required careful attention and I had to remind myself of remembering to take notes and not only be involved in the activity, but also actively observe the whole group. The workshop journal captured the flow of the sessions, the participants' reactions and discussions that were not recorded.

During the research process, I wrote an ethical journal (Appendix 3), starting from the initial step of applying for ethical approval from the Human Sciences Ethics Committee of the Helsinki Region Universities of Applied Sciences ethical board. This journal was as a space to document my reflective thoughts and the ethical challenges encountered during the project. Written in a diary format, it followed a chronological order, but it allowed me to express my feelings, doubts, and reflections during the thesis writing and workshop process. The ethical journal made visible how important the careful and thoughtful ethical consideration is when doing research. I made notes and entries in the journal after each workshop day, during the in the ethical approval process and other important stages of the project.

4.4 Data Analysis

I used narrative approach in the analysis. The narrative approach felt right as my data included personal and social contexts that was easier to approach through narratives. Flick (2023, p. 258) explains, narratives do not only communicate personal experiences, but also reflect broader societal events and developments. Narrative analysis is more than only storytelling. According to Leavy (2017, pp. 139, 145) it is a tool to interpret personal narratives to uncover deeper social, cultural, and personal meaning. Using narrative approaches in research setting can be useful especially when exploring ethical and practical challenges with vulnerable populations. Narrative approaches give the participants' voice more space offering them agency in shaping the narrative of the research. When doing

research that involve marginalized communities, is this ethical approach and ensuring that their voices are heard very important (Leavy, 2017, pp. 157, 199–200). Flick (2023, p. 258) reminds on the importance on understanding how people make sense of their experience through both, content, and structure. Both Leavy (2017, p. 199) and Flick (2023, p. 258) empathize how narrative analysis allows researchers to see deeper into the realities of their research topic.

I generated the data for this analysis through three sources. My workshop journal was 19 pages handwritten in a A4 notebook; transcribed interviews were 10 pages from three interview sessions that lasted 31.30 minutes, 8.34 minutes and 6.40 minutes; and my ethical journal was 14 pages written on word document.

The workshop journal documented each workshops' flow, who participated, what we did, and it also captured participants' reflections on the creative process and my observations of the situations. The transcribed interviews gave me a detailed source of the discussions and dialogue the participants had with each other while answering my open-ended questions about belonging and society. My ethical journal, written throughout the project offered a reflective platform and made visible the ethical moments during the study, giving insight into the research process involving participation.

By examining the workshops day by day, I aimed to collect a board understanding of the dynamics between the participants and see the developments in the feelings and interactions between the participants during each session. At the beginning of the analysis process, I first reviewed the workshop journal and ethical journal. After preliminary review I transcribed the interviews that I conducted during the workshops. As my research question was "What kinds of practical and ethical aspects need to be considered when conducting creativity-based participatory research with homeless people with heavy substance use?", I wanted to first analyse the data through three main types of situations that answered the research question.

Ethical situations: These are circumstances where ethical consideration, such as privacy, informed consent, participant autonomy or inclusion were at the front.

Professional situations: These situations brought up the role or need of professional judgement, such as using qualified empathy, sociocultural animation or the health and social care expertise, which helped to solve and address certain situations.

Practical situations: These included the practical concerns when doing a participatory research process with homeless people using drugs, such as choosing location for workshops, materials and ensuring the low threshold engagement.

I used a color-coded system to identify these categories in my journals. I used purple for ethical situations; yellow for professional situations; and green for practical situations. Then I went through the ethical and workshop journal entries marking these categories. Once marked I counted the occurrences of each colour type of situation each workshop day and gathered these into a table (Appendix 5).

Next, I wanted to see the variety of these situations and I created sub-categories for more specific themes. These included: Privacy related situations; space-related considerations; rules-related aspects; research related issues; and person-related challenges. Then I cross-marked these subcategories across a second table (Appendix 5). This gave me a clearer view of the different ethical, professional, and practical challenges that arose during the research process. This step gave me an overview of the different types of considerations essential in conducting participatory research with this certain group of people.

As I have background in blog writing and my enthusiasm for storytelling, I wanted to bring all the data into a narrative story. The journals and transcripts contained insight into the participants' personal life stories and as the participatory research process is a story that happened through the activities, was it natural to use a storytelling approach. As Flick (2023, p. 259) described in a narrative, the starting

situation is described, and then important events are chosen from various experiences and presented in a clear, logical order. The coding helped me to choose the important events which I then formulated into a story.

I wrote a narrative story for each workshop day. The stories allowed me to present the findings and unfold and give a voice to the participants' individual experiences. I aimed to capture the emotional and subjective experiences, also including observations about the mood, lighting and atmosphere and other nuances in the space during the workshops. This method allows for a nuanced exploration of the interactions, behaviours, and experiences that emerged, noting the shifts in group dynamics, the emotional currents, and the personal transformations that occurred over time. Each day's workshop is treated as independent narrative, offering a lens through which to view the progression and outcomes of the sessions.

4.5 Ethical Approaches and Guidelines in the Research

In Finland the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK) defines the good practices in research and these guidelines need to be followed when doing research in Finland (TENK, 2019, pp. 9–10). TENK (2019) outlines that when research is done about or with people, it is very important to consider the ethics carefully. The research must be conducted in a way that protects the autonomy, privacy and dignity of the people taking part in the research. (TENK, 2019, pp. 9–10) Following the TENK (2019, p. 6) guidelines assures the participants rights are protected. I have conducted my study leaning on these ethical guidelines.

This research is based on careful ethical consideration. Considerations include assuring the participation is voluntary and the participants had the right to change their mind about participation anytime and that they were well informed about the possible risks of the research, like TENK (2019, pp. 9–10) guides researchers to do.

In this study I had no professional relationship to the place where the data was generated. Therefore, taking part in the research or workshops had no relation to

how the people were treated during and after the study. (TENK, 2019, pp. 9–10) This was ethically important to ensure there was no power angle within the researcher and participants (Leavy, 2017, p. 249). The final artwork remained in the possession of the low-threshold space. Copyrights belong to the participants of the workshops. Information regarding copyright and the final placement of the artwork was included in the participation form for the research.

Flick (2023, p. 123) stresses the importance of offering participants full transparency regarding the aim of the research. Flick (2023, p.123) reminds researcher discuss and explain the expectations participants might have towards the study. This way the researcher can ensure the participants really understand the informed consent and what they are involving in. In this study each participant had to sign a written consent (Appendix 1) to participate in the research and related interviews. If a person did not wish to participate in the study but still wanted to take part in the workshop, that was allowed. There were some people taking part in the workshop activities, without taking part in the research. Their conversations are left out of the data. Only those individuals who gave written consent to participate in the research were involved in the interviews as Leavy (2017, p. 216) instructs.

As research ethics go often beyond formal procedures, such as informing participants what they are attending to, they also require continuous reflection. Flick (2023, p. 132) argues that ethical dilemmas are often complex and contextual. This is why it is important to approach these dilemmas with flexibility and understanding also from the participants' perspective. In this study all the steps were carefully thought from the ethical and respectful perspective, still minimizing the possible hindering of research. In this study I wanted to give the participants as much possibilities as possible to contribute to the process and be aware what I was researching (Leavy, 2017, p. 249).

In this study, I followed the TENK's (2019, p. 12; 2023, p.13) guidelines on data management. In this research, personal data was generated from the recording

of semi-structured interviews, where the participant's voice might have been identifiable, thus interpreted as personal data. The consent forms include the participants signatures, that might be identifiable. No other identifiable information about the interviewees was collected during data generation. In the research, no personal data was collected from other sources. I made sure that personal data, such as the recorded discussions were securely stored in a locked space and the data was anonymized. I used pseudonyms such as #1 and #2 to protect participants' identities and no identifiable information was shared outside. The data was stored on secure platforms, all being behind a password and accessible only by me. All data will be destroyed after the completion of the study, no later than by December 2025. In this research the participatory design (Leavy, 2017, pp. 224–253) ensured that the participants had agency over their contributions and to the final artwork. As Flick outlined (2023, p. 120) participants' needs and interests were considered throughout the process, ensuring that no harm was caused, and their contribution was respected.

5 Findings

In this chapter I present the findings of this study, structured around the narratives of each workshop day. Each subchapter is a narrative of one workshop, offering a detailed description of my and workshop participants' experiences, interactions, and reflections from that day. Through these narratives, I aim to capture the changing dynamics and insights that emerged during the workshops. At the end of each workshop narrative, a concise summary is provided, highlighting the key takeaways, and connecting them to the study's conceptual framework. My research question in this study is: What kinds of practical and ethical aspects need to be considered when conducting creativity-based participatory research with homeless people with heavy substance use?

5.1 Day One: The Beginning of a Colourful Journey

I arrived at the venue around noon and set up my workstation with paint, brushes, and other tools for the workshop. I greeted the early arrivals at the venue warmly, exchanging greetings and introducing myself to those I had not met before. The venue staff were quick to assist, and together with one of the workshop participants, we got the cupboard from the upstairs storage. Its arrival in the center of the hall marked the beginning of our project—a piece that would soon reflect the diverse stories and perspectives of those participated.

With the cupboard in place, I set about making the necessary preparations. Cutting sponges into "dabbers" for easier paint application, arranging paints by hue on the worktable, and ensuring brushes and tape were within reach—each action was deliberate, aimed at fostering a smooth transition into our creative exploration.

By 1 PM, attendees had begun to drop in, I greeted them with a warm smile and an invitation to join us at the worktable. Some familiar faces from previous engagements expressed their eagerness, having anticipated this workshop series. Conversations flowed naturally, mixing topics of art with the broader themes of

society and home that underpinned my ongoing research and thesis. We agreed to start after lunch.

At 2 PM, after lunch was served, we gathered around the worktable to begin the workshop. I took a moment to revisit the details of my research, ensuring transparency and asking if there were questions. Together, we reviewed the information sheet and consent forms, underscoring the voluntary nature of participation and the freedom to withdraw at any time which was a principle fundamental to our engagement.

With forms signed and a sense of mutual understanding established, we began the actual workshop. Four participants began by sectioning off their parts of the cabinet with tape. Participant #1, bold and methodical, covered their area with a maze of lines, while Participant #2 opted for a more fluid approach, requesting permission to paint freehand within their boundaries. (Photos 1 and 2) Participant #3 worked quietly, their focus already t in the placement of tape.



Photo 1. Participant placing tape on cupboard



Photo 1. Participant painting freehand on cupboard

The atmosphere hummed with creative energy. I suggested exploring a common theme, recalling our earlier discussions on society, home, and related issues. We agreed on abstract interpretations, affirming that art need not mirror reality to evoke profound statements. Themes of "society" and "belonging to a community" emerged organically, resonating with the group's collective topic.

Participant #2 asked a question about painting a heart, something different from geometric shapes but filled with symbolism. I encouraged their exploration, emphasizing the freedom to define personal boundaries within our collaborative canvas. They spoke of the shape of heart as a symbol of community, connected with the cupboard that represented our shared societal space. Interest in our project grew, drawing curious glances and inquiries from other venue visitors. I welcomed their questions, extending invitations to join in our creative dialogue. Participant #4, taking a break for a smoke, and Participant #3, grabbing a coffee, paused momentarily before returning to their designated spots, eager to resume their artistic endeavor.

By 3:30 PM, the transition from tape to paint marked a deeper immersion into creativity. The once simple cupboard began to reflect collection of colors, each

stroke a testament to personal expression. Participant #1, their enthusiasm contagious, engaged passersby in animated explanations of their artistic process, encouraging them to contribute. Meanwhile, Participant #3, back from their break, received gentle guidance on tape techniques from Participant #1, an act of supportive dynamic taking shape.

It was at this point that I initiated our first semi-structured discussion, capturing our collective reflections on society and inclusion. With their consent, I recorded the dialogue. One participant, reflective and methodical in their painting, spoke of the meditative quality natural in creativity, a respite from life's complexities. Participant #1, with a background in construction, shared their preference for vibrant colors and varied tasks over monotony, linking their art to a sense of identity and purpose. The conversation changed through different landscapes of experience the people openly shared. One participant, telling about their Estonian heritage, spoke passionately of hands-on craftsmanship and the transformative power of home restoration. Participant #2, sharing their enthusiastic toy for a children's drawing device, detailed a unique pattern they had practices with the device. The pattern included arrow-like strokes, according to the participant a methodical ritual for them, that found new dimension on the cupboard side.

As our dialogue deepened, we delved into the theme of communal spaces that can also foster relaxation and creativity, juxtaposed against the pressures of societal conformity. One participant articulated concerns about societal manipulation and the unequal distribution of power, advocating fiercely for the freedom to pursue personal passions authentically. Discussions turned reflective, with participants sharing emotional experiences of homelessness, quests for emotional authenticity in nature, and reflections on societal expectations.

Within the diversity of narratives, a collective longing emerged, for community, honesty, and environments where individual voices are not only heard but valued. There was consensus on the transformative potential of inclusive communities, grounded in genuine communication and commitment to mutual respect. Yet, as

our dialogue ebbed and flowed, Participant #3's voice rose with emotional intensity. Their disagreement, sparked by discussions on societal inequalities and the exclusion of marginalized groups. This momentarily unsettled our creative and safe space. Sensing the tension, others withdrew into silence. Participant #4, withdraw themselves for smoke break, while Participants #1 and #2 immersed themselves deeper into their painting, seeking to avoid the conflict.

In my role as facilitator, I maintained a calm behavior, gently guiding Participant #3 away from triggering topics. With carefully chosen words and a steadfast presence, I redirected our focus towards shared memories, a theme that had earlier connected divided opinions. As discussions turned to childhood recollections and the meaning of home, tensions mellowed and were replaced by a shared sense of nostalgia and fellowship. Participant #1, #2, and #4 engaged in conversations about the resilience of memory, the art of restoration, and the transformative power of creativity. Laughter filled the space as they shared anecdotes of youthful escapades and the influence of maternal love. The intensity of their painting matched by the depth of their connection was a meaningful proof of art in building bonds between people.

As the day progressed, the busy hall quietened, the rhythm of painting punctuated by the soft murmur of conversation and the occasional clink of paintbrush against cupboard. Other venue visitors rested on nearby couches, throwing curious glances at our project. Participants #1, #2, and #4 remained loyal in their creative activity, their own spots on the cupboard evolving with each brushstroke, each layer of color a reflection of personal narrative and shared experience. Participant #3, their spirit temporarily soothed by the nostalgia-laden conversations, quietly left, leaving behind a space on the cupboard telling their unique perspective of the topic. Their departure, though unemotional, highlighted the fragile stability of the workshop community only just seeking to be formed.

During the steady pace of our creative work, an unexpected visitor disrupted our peaceful activity. A non-workshop participant stormed in with aggressive energy

using our tools and colours to paint their jacket with bold strokes. I gave an invitation to join our workshop, but the offer was sharply declined.

After the person got their jacket painted, they left the venue with same rush as they came. At 4:45 PM, a staff member's announcement of closing time signaled the ending of our creative journey of the day. Participants gathered their thoughts, winding down their paintings with a sense of fulfillment and quiet reflection. Smiles on their faces they looked at their work and I could feel their satisfaction.

As brushes were rinsed and supplies tidied, conversations lingered, anchored in shared memories. We made plans to continue the work the following week. When everyone else had left, participant #4 painted one smaller picture on the cupboard (Photo 3). At the same time, he wanted to share his life story and upcoming possible court sentence. It was a calm and peaceful moment. The eagerness all participants showed for the project proofed the workshop's impact on creative expression and community building.

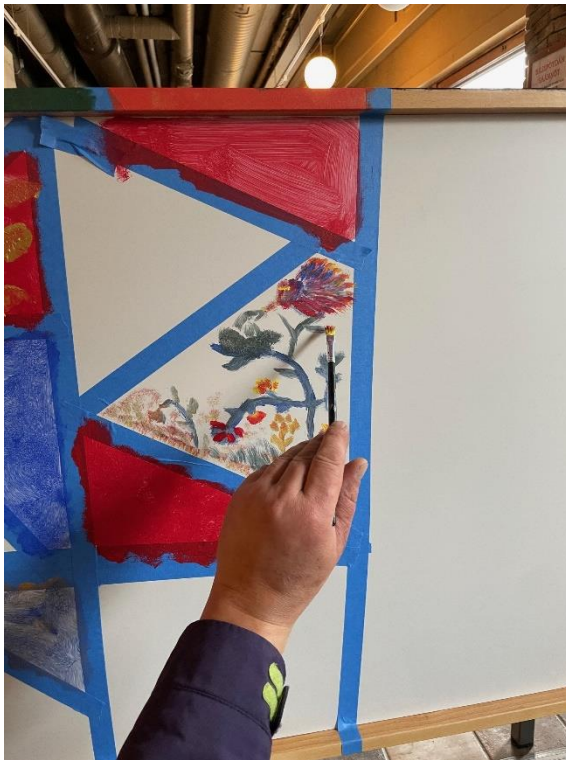


Photo 2. Participant painting small picture after everyone else has left

Highlighting ethics as a core component, this first workshop fostered a safe environment where participants could express their thoughts and experiences without fear of exploitation. The importance of fostering the safe environment and ensuring the people understand what the context of the participation was, became clear during this first workshop day. The creative and open approach towards the participants allowed the individuals to determine their own comfort levels when sharing their personal narratives (Granfelt, 1998, p. 41).

Sociocultural animation played an important role to the workshop's design, encouraging to active participation and enabling the participants' own voice (Kurki, 2000, p. 11). Handling quickly changing emotional outbursts and touching life stories pointed out the need for a professional approach in certain situations. Mastering qualified empathy helped navigating sensitive topics and handle the heated-up feelings during the workshop (Raatikainen, Rauhala & Mäenpää, 2022, p. 3).

The workshop prioritized fostering a sense of belonging and building community, supporting Nivala and Rynnänen's (2018, p. 142) claim of its significance in human connection. By encouraging participants to connect through shared experiences, the workshop created a community atmosphere. The workshop demonstrated the transformative potential of participatory creativity as a means of community engagement, empowerment, and possibility to social change, but also highlighted the importance of the ethical and practical aspects such as working in the open space and ensuring all participants have a secure feeling to express themselves.

5.2 Day Two: Continuation and Collaboration

I arrived at the venue around noon, ready to continue the painting project. The previous session left some participants with unfinished sections, and parts of the cabinet were still bare. My aim was to encourage more participants to join. I prepared the supplies, laid out the paints, and fetched the cupboard from storage, where it had been drying. The venue was quieter than usual, but as lunchtime

drew near, more people began to drop in. Their curiosity around the cupboard grew, and several expressed a desire to join in the painting. I explained the project to them, detailing why I was taking notes and what my research was about. We read through the consent forms together, and participants #5, #6, and #7 signed up for the project.

Our discussions revolved again around the familiar themes of belonging, society, and inclusion. Participants #2 and #1, who had worked on the cupboard before, also returned, eager to continue their contributions. Participant #1's face shined with satisfaction at how their painted section looked once the tape was removed. The space was filled with enthusiastic chatter and laughter, with everyone opting this time for bright, cheerful colours. "Where will this cupboard go?" #5 asked. "It will stay here for your enjoyment," I replied." That's wonderful! Just perfect!" #5 exclaimed." This gives a warm feeling", added #6, to which #5 responded, "Yeah, your painting reminds me of Jamaica. It's amazing!"

There was a lively and supportive atmosphere among the participants. Starting the workshop before lunch created a bit of restlessness. There was a buzz in the air, and it was clear that people were hungry. Many stopped by to ask about our project and admire the painted surfaces.

Participant #2 continued working on the section they had started last time and asked if they could paint another picture in an empty spot. As I replied with a yes, they picked up a new colour and brush with a smile, their whole presence was far more confident than before. They repeatedly verbally expressed satisfaction with their first painting. During the lunch break, many participants went to eat and then returned to their work. Participant #5, after eating and smoking, was delighted to see someone else had added to their painting. "Now I can continue; it's inspiring that this is a collective piece that others also contribute to," they said, choosing a green color and continuing the painting with their fingers (Photo 4).



Photo 4. Participant painting with their fingers

The cupboard attracted a lot of attention. Passersby openly admired the paintings and the overall look. The participants smiled, clearly pleased with the compliments. "Art! You all are so talented!" someone shouted as they walked by.

Participant #5 wiped off part of their painting with a clear vision for a new design. They hummed to themselves, fully occupied. Participants #2 and #1 worked quietly side by side, creating a peaceful, collaborative atmosphere. "We're a good team here, with very talented people," #5 said, and the others nodded and smiled. Participant #1 finished their section, then walked around the cupboard, closely examining the others' work, complimenting the colours and designs, and showing no sign of rushing. Participant #2 concentrated on their section in silence for an hour, while #1 shared details about their work to me, pointing out specific areas they had repainted. Participant #2 showed the staff about their painting and expressed a newfound passion for it, wondering if they could get canvases to continue painting at the venue also after the workshop project.

By four o'clock, people started drifting outside to enjoy the beautiful day. The entire cupboard was now painted. At four, we cleaned up together and moved the cupboard aside to dry. We decided not to put it back in storage but leave it in the open for everyone to see. We agreed to continue the workshop the next day

with salt dough work. “New material, this is the best!” said #5 enthusiastically. The day ended on a high note.

This workshop session pointed out the importance of trust and the feeling of having ownership over the piece. The creative engagement the participants clearly felt when returning eagerly to the workshop after several days pause was a sign of that engagement being built. Through my actions as sociocultural animator, the participants were encouraged to express themselves freely, using painting as a tool to foster interaction and community building (Kurki, 2000, pp. 88–91).

Participants actively contributed to the collective artwork, demonstrating how participatory activities can empower individuals to feel valued and included (Freire, 1970, p. 88). The participants' growing confidence, shown through their enthusiasm for the project and their satisfaction with their work, reflects the positive impact of creating a safe and inclusive environment. By fostering creativity and active engagement, the workshop provided a platform where participants felt a sense of ownership and pride (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2019, p. 205).

5.3 Day Three: Homes for the Plants

I arrived at the venue in good time, around 11am to set up the workstation and prepare everything for the day. It was time to take a new step in our creative journey with this cupboard. As discussed on previous day with participant #5, we were about to do some salt dough moulding in this workshop. I began my day at the venue with preparing the salt dough in the staff kitchen. After some consideration I ended up doing it on my own, as I could not see any of the participants around yet.

I laid out the tiny plants I bought on the previous eve for this occasion on the table and fetched some chairs around our workstation. The venue was still quiet, with only distant conversations from the couch corner lingering in the slightly dusty air. Lunch preparation sounds from the kitchen drifted in the big hall, and the staff laughed and joked in their own corner. The air was filled with spicy odours from

the kitchen and a hint of coffee from the coffee corner. It was payday, I remembered. Meaning many of the participants were getting their benefits paid on that day. At the moment I was slightly criticizing myself over that fact, as I as a professional in this field, should have remembered this very fundamental fact that very likely was going to affect the likeliness of attendance.

Around noon people started to drop in the space for the daily warm lunch. I noted #2 sleeping in a corner, not wanting to disturb their sleep, thinking there might have been a rough night behind them. Participants #6 and #7 eagerly approach our workstation asking what is on the agenda for the day. I explained the plan of making pots for the plants and decorating them with the pearls I was currently preparing on the table. During the conversation I reminded them about our subject: society and belonging. #6 eyes brightened “Oh, so we can make homes for these plants? Mask these unusual plants to fit into society!” I encouraged the idea and welcomed them to approach today’s workshop from that point of view.

Participants #6 and #7 begun the moulding with clear satisfaction in their action. Participant #7 seemed to find comfort in the softness of the dough which seemed to evoke memories of their childhood (Photo 5). Memories of childhood dream jobs were shared, and they shared the reasons why life did not go as planned: “Then my life just happened, and the society did not want me or my skills anymore.”

Encouraged from the personal opening, participant #7 begun to tell about their daughter and how she loves to draw them. Horses were a big part of their life, before everything was lost. Big hands making small pots for tiny plants in a good pace, I granted permission to also make a bigger pot as participant #7 had completed two small ones but wanted to keep working.



Photo 3. Participant molding pots for plants

Participant #4, lingered around the table and finally, #6 went for a smoke with them. Afterwards both of them sat down to our workstation and began to wonder what to do. #2 and #1 greeted us, saying they would participate once they have had lunch. When lunch was served and for a moment the workstation emptied for a moment. I stayed put and arranged the pearls and plants to be easily accessible. A staff member came to chat and expressed their doubts about the plants lasting without being stolen. I suggested placing the cupboard on a spot where the staff could see it, hoping that would prevent the plants from being stolen from the piece.

After lunch was eaten, the people gathered again around the workstation. The atmosphere was happy and positive. Laughter filled the table as #5 said their pot will be as messy as they are themselves. Others laughed with them but assured the piece itself was great. The pastel-coloured pearls were used a lot and seemed to be especially #6's favourite. The conversation turned into pondering whether it is stealing if you take something you have made yourself. I steered the conversation towards considering whether it is fair to take from a communal piece. #6, #7 and #1 mutually agreed that it is not; #5 remained silent but did not seem offended by the direct conversation. #3 was nowhere to be seen. "Payday" seemed to answer their absence. "Payday" needed no further explanation; there was a mutual understanding of its meaning.

Moulding the dough and sitting around the table together empowered participants to share openly about their lives. They all had a normal childhood that then, due to different mishaps, turned into something else. All unique stories, all equally sad and unfair. Common activity seemed to calm and ground the participants, the conversation flowed easily, without hesitation or difficulties, like water over stones. Their gaze was in their hands, giving the conversation room and space to begin and continue, one story after the other, with nods and silent mutters of agreement following the words around the table. Hands formed pots and their voices talked about dreams and wishes. #4 said "If I just got my life in order and had my head straight. I wish I would not die from the drugs." #7 added "If I just once in my life had a chance to travel aboard, that would be so great." #2 said "This illness tears life apart. It tears one out of society. I cannot get help; I do not belong anywhere, and I have no worth." Steering the conversation towards less negative feelings I threw out the question of participation in research like the one I was conducting. How does that feel? "Fucking great! We should be listened to if we are researched." (#4) "This makes me feel valued, like am worth something. And we are allowed to do this art!" (#5) "For once we (roskasakki=junkies) are taken in consideration, nice to see this happen too." (#7)

At this point I decided that it was a good time for our second semi-structured discussion. I wished to be able to capture the easy flow of the conversation that was going on around the table. As I asked for consent from the participants, some agreed easily, others remained silent. I reminded everyone that that they did not have to talk on the record if it made them feel uneasy.

I began the conversation in asking what made them want to take part in this communal art and research project. One participant said the invite to be part of this project came from seeing the cupboard and being inspired by the possibility it offered after seeing others working on it. Another participant said the materials offered were the attractive part that raised their interest and made it easy to get involved. There was mutual consensus that seeing others focusing on the workshop tasks and clearly enjoying it was a great reason to get involved themselves too. Conversations flowed into the consistency of salt dough and how salt was

harvested. My attempts to steer the dialogue back to answering my questions about belonging were ignored and I hesitated to push it too much. Out of sudden one participant decided to stop the recording, emphasizing it disturbed their concentration. I let the participant to turn off the recorder and decided to try the next day again.

It took a while for the conversation and atmosphere to relax again. The discourses were somewhat vague, and I let many of them just flow by. I focused on encouraging people to continue their work, as many seemed to want to stop after the first pot was finished. Getting involved myself in the actual work seemed to help and people returned to the workstation. Praising and giving positive feedback helped participants feel their efforts are valued. Time flew by and it was already nearly 4pm. Lunch had been long served and the venue was quiet. We got all the pots done and the participants helped me lift them over to the cupboard to dry for the next day's workshop. We agreed again together to begin the next and last workshop at 12am the next day.

When everyone else was gone, participant #5 lingered around the cupboard, looking at the work they had accomplished during the day. I walked next to them and stood in silence to give them a possibility to share what was on their mind. With a brightened face and smile they turned towards me and said "Now I understand what you meant! That is such a lovely sight when all of them are there. My moody feeling about not being able to take my piece home vanished as I saw all of them together! I see now what you meant with the idea of a communal piece. Everyone has done a small part; it will be a whole!" The day ended with a feeling of success.

In this workshop ethical and practical consideration had to be made on spot and I had to weigh the possible outcomes very quickly to be able to react in a right way. During the session, one participant expressed discomfort with the recording, prompting me to ethically decide to halt it. This choice underscored the importance of respecting participant autonomy and emotional safety, prioritizing their comfort over data collection. To be able to make that call I had to have a

good interaction with the participants and be able to see why the recording rose discomfort (Granfelt, 2009, p.146). In these moments the researcher must be able to recognize also other communication than only verbal. It is important to facilitate but also notice other expressions where non-verbal cues of discomfort or also comfort and joy are shared (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 45). As Leavy (2017, p. 237) states, in CBPR, the balance of power between the researcher and the community is crucial and requires careful consideration and adjustment. The shared power dynamics can significantly affect participants' engagement and sense of agency. Moreover, as Banks et al. (2013, p. 266) note, ethical dilemmas arise within this process. Questions about what is considered right and wrong, the tools used to adjust power imbalances, and the potential harms and benefits of these adjustments demand thoughtful ethical reflection.

As discussions centred on shared creativity and life challenges, the need for inclusive spaces that acknowledge individual narratives while fostering collective identity became clear. By the end of the workshop, participants expressed satisfaction in their contributions to the communal piece, demonstrating the profound impact of creative engagement on feelings of belonging and worth.

5.4 Day Four: Finding a Momentarily Feeling of Belonging

As I arrived at the venue, I was feeling slightly emotional for this being the last day but also eager to see where this last day will take us in this project. Our goal was to paint the pots and finish the art piece.

Upon my arrival I first ended up in a conversation with the staff members. They told the project has drawn a great deal of positive attention. Placing the workstation in the middle of the hall was clearly a good choice. I also was told that there have been thankful comments that this kind of project was offered to the people visiting this place. The conversation meanders in the topics of community-based art and how often the marginalized people like homeless and people actively using substances are left out of them. For some reason activating and ani-

minating their attendance in such projects doesn't seem to interest very many people, even though it would be extremely important for maintaining the feeling of belonging.

As I prepared the tools for the workshop (Photo 6), participant #2 woke up from their regular corner and came eagerly to help with the preparation. I had chosen new colours for the pots; these were shiny and slightly glittery. To avoid embarrassing the participants from not being able to open the paint lids with their swollen hands, I opened them already beforehand. Participant #2 sat on the table, putting their shabby backpack under the table, and taking their pot and choosing colours and states "I remembered right away that we agreed to begin at 12am today. It is good that we are on time today, as this place closes at 4pm." Before them begun to paint the pot, them showed me from their phone the pictures them had drawn this week. A staff member saw our conversation and headed over to us. They introduced themselves as voluntary work coordinator and explained that due to the eagerness and inspiration of participant #2 they are now looking into the possibilities to offer some canvases and paint to the visitors of the venue.



Photo 4. Prepared colours and pots for workshop

Participants #4 and #7 join participant #7 in their painting. I explained carefully what we were doing: painting the pots we moulded the previous day and finishing the cupboard.

Venue was silent. Sun was shining and it was one of the first warm spring days. The light shimmered through the big windows and somewhere in the background there was some music. The participants focused on painting, conversations were only silent and short lines pondering which colour was the best (Photo 7). I wondered where participant #5 was, they said they would be on time. I carefully took aside the pots they made and make sure they were not touched. I told the other participants that they were allowed to take any of the pots and that there was no need to paint only the one they moulded themselves, reminding them that it would be a communal piece in the end.



Photo 5. Participants painting pots

Lunch was served early, and it interrupted the workshop for a while. After participants got back from their short break the conversation circled around plants, their symbolic meaning. Participant #6 was silent for a good amount of time and said then “I guess they can also talk about belonging to something. When they flourish, they are supported.” Participant #7 got excited about the symbolism and agreed “Yeah, other people are the light and warmth and nourishments!” Participant #4 added “Or the services can be those things. Or for example a flat, or any accommodation, could be the sun. That is quite an important thing! “

It was almost 2.30pm when #5 finally arrived. They told them overslept. They had gotten only shortly a flat and the feeling of being allowed to sleep in, was just

so lovely, them was not able to get up earlier. Them empathized how vital it felt that them had a space where no one can intrude. With great enthusiasm them got on to begin the painting. I went to get the pots I had set aside and brought them to the workstation where participant #5 was sitting. I handed the pots to them and reminded that them asked them to be put aside so no one would touch them. "You listened to me! Thank you! It feels so good and important that it really mattered to you what I was saying", them cried out.

Upon participant #5 arrival I asked if I can once more record a conversation, hoping I could get the semi-structured discussion done I had in my mind for the research. Once again, I told the participants what the research was about and what the topic was I wished we could talk upon. People around the table nodded in agreement, but many of them fell silent.

I began the recording. People fell silent, some of them disappear to get coffee or come up with some other reason to leave the workstation for a moment. The conversation lingered and stayed very shallow. One participant talked about the colours them choose and another one wondered about whether them can paint a pot that another one had made. Any deeper discussions were ignored, people fell silent and just did not get involved. After ten minutes I decided to stop recording, understanding that this is just not working. Again, after the recording left the workstation silent, but as soon as it is turned off people return. The sunlight makes the pots shine and people begun to chat again. The stiffness was gone, the high note was back and the air was filled with warmth and proudness of the project coming together in front of our eyes.

After 3pm, most participants begun to be done, all pots were painted and the lights were installed in the cupboard. I noticed people started to talk about leaving; the sunny day was calling them to spend time outdoors. I asked all participants once more to gather around the workstation for a last discussion. As everyone was settled, I begun the conversation by thanking them and told them how extremely and utterly proud I was of their commitment. I asked how they felt about the process and project. Participant #2 said "This was great. Something within

me awakened.” Participant #4 said “You listened to us and stayed calm even though we were kind of difficult. You truly engaged us.”

Participant #5 thought for a long while and answered then “For the first time in a long time I got to be part of something, and in the end, it turned into a great piece of art.” Participant #7 replied to this “Yeah, this was truly great. But the recordings, they were not our thing. Will you get the research done anyway now?” Participant #2 also gets concerned “Yeah, what does this experience now tell you? Does it tell how to work with us? So other people can do this in the future too?”

I told them I would love to meet them again in a few weeks’ time, interview some of them about their afterthoughts. I explained that in participatory research, it would be crucial to do the analysis together with the participants. But the group seemed to feel that all of it was too complicated and hard. One participant said, “You can do that without us!” and the others around them nodded. It seemed like they had decided on that spot that they did not want to be deeper involved.

The last half hour we spent arranging the last pots into the cupboard, assuring the lights were correctly installed and pondering what would be the perfect spot for this amazing piece of community art they had created. We ended up placing the cupboard in the middle of the hall, for everyone to see and greet (Photo 8 and 9). Gathering around it for the last time we cherished the positive energy it brought in the space. Standing there in a circle around the cupboard we agreed that all those good vibes and lovely high notes we shared during these days together will continue to live here through the cupboard.

Participant 6# summarized beautifully the meaning of these days by saying “We were, or we formed a community. That is quite cool. As we do not get the feeling of belonging from anywhere else, we just created our own society here for a moment!” The day had come to an end, the workshops and the project had come to an end. The piece of this momentarily created society remained in the space, bathing in sunlight, carrying all those shared words, stories, emotions, and moments we had together.



Photo 6. Cupboard placed in the middle of the venue for everyone to see



Photo 7. Plants and lights placed in the cupboard

During this last workshop there were some conversations about the symbolism of the plants and their connection to belonging. Participants found a connection between plants representing growth and given support and the making of pots were like homes for them. The activity and the workshop clearly helped the participants to find a way to interact with each other and form a social bond.

As one participant arrived late but found their pots untouched as they had asked the previous day, the gratitude for being listened was to be heard in their verbal communication. This strengthened the ethical importance of respecting the autonomy and emotional well-being by giving the participants thoughts and opinions the weight and importance of an equal community member (Banks et al., 2013, p. 266; Granfelt, 2009, p. 146). During the recording of the semi-structured interview my questions were not really answered, and the atmosphere fell hard, and the discomfort was clear. I prioritized once again the participants feeling of safety and made the decision to stop recording after a very short time. I wanted to foster the trust between me and the participants (Leavy, 2017, p. 273). At the end of the workshop participants reflected on their experiences, expressing feelings of pride and connection to the community they had formed. One participant beautifully encapsulated this sentiment by stating, “We formed a community. That is quite cool.”

6 Conclusions and Discussion

In this chapter I present the conclusions made based on the findings in my study. I focus particularly on the ethical and practical aspects that appear when conducting community based participatory research with people who use drugs. In this chapter I discuss the challenges and responsibilities that researcher faces in this context. In this chapter I also assess the trustworthiness of my study. I look into the choices I made in data generation and the ethical approach. At the end of this chapter, I discuss the need of future research in this field. The research question in this study was: What practical and ethical aspects needed to be considered when conducting creativity based participatory research with homeless people with heavy substance use?

6.1 Ethical Engagement and Empowerment in Participatory Research

In this study, I worked with a group of people who were marginalized in many ways. They were homeless and actively used substances. Their problems were complex, including societal, behavioural, mental and health and structural problems, I and can be categorized under the concept of wicked problems. As Rittel and Webber (1973, pp. 10–11) note, wicked problems do not have simple solutions. Therefore, there is not just one solution to, for example, resolving the sense of belonging or inclusion for this group of people.

The sense of belonging in society often does not necessarily come to realization for marginalized people. Holmberg (2022, pp. 150–151) explains that the cultural consensus is often that, to become a full member of mainstream society, marginalized individuals should change their lives to suit mainstream society's expectations. Nivala and Rynänen (2019, p. 171) on the other hand remind that belonging and feeling part of society is not an individual feature, but a state that can be maintained or changed depending on time and situation. Based on these thoughts is also important to note that feeling a sense of belonging to a community does not necessarily mean that a person feels connected to society itself.

This is an important consideration when forming community-based groups and implementing a project with them.

During the workshops, several practical and ethical considerations emerged. To ensure ethical engagement, creating a safe and trustful environment was essential. This included considering where the workshops took place to ensure easy access and where participants would feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and engaging in the activity. It also involved making sure participants fully understood what they were engaging in and understood the research they were part of. Making the research clear and understandable was important so that participants could set their own boundaries. Allowing them to define their creative boundaries seemed to empower them, enhancing engagement and ownership over the piece we were working on, as we worked together towards a common goal (Kurki, 2000, p. 89; Nivala & Ryyänänen, 2019, p. 207).

Although my research did not include participants' personal life stories or health data, ethical rules needed to be considered throughout the study carefully, as they were in a vulnerable position. Their status as heavy drug users made the topic sensitive (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 16). The situations where the recording device had to be turned off during the interviews twice underscored the importance of prioritizing the participants' feelings of safety and fostering trust between us over data generation. Gylling (2006, p. 358) stated that a researcher should also apply the same ethical principles in their professional and personal lives.

When working with a group of people with active substance use, there needs to be a fundamental understanding of their substance addiction and their life situation (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 118). Addiction is a chronic disease that includes a strong physical and mental urge for a substance or activity (Ruuska & Sulkunen, 2013, p. 34). For those with addiction, choices that seem easy for others—such as participating in a workshop, engaging in activities, and showing up regularly—are important and difficult decisions. The constant urge to use substances or engage in activities related to the substance use is always

present, meaning participants had to actively choose each day to attend the workshops. This makes engagement and attendance for this group challenging. The workshops and the participation in the research process had to be built in a way that gave the participants a sense of agency. Based on these factors the workshops constant reflection on ethics and the balance of power dynamics between myself and the participants was essential to ensure the participants' sense of agency.

The use of sociocultural animation in the workshop setting lowered the barrier for participation and encouraged participants to express their ideas, giving space for their voices. Qualified empathy helped me navigate some complex situations. Kurki (2000, p. 88) says the key to inspiring people through sociocultural animation lies in actively involving oneself in the process. The setup of the workshop, from a public workstation to me actively inviting people to join, encouraged easy participation. As Kurki (2000) argues, "genuine participation cannot occur without sensitization and motivation" (p. 133). Therefore, the role of the workshop leader or inspirer in this setting is crucial. Kurki (2000, p. 133) emphasizes that a key skill for an inspirer is the ability to sensitively engage people, drawing motivation from their cultural desires and aspirations.

Throughout the workshop days, participants shared a diversity of personal stories. This happened under my supervision, and I could subtly steer the dialogues, so they did not delve too deep. This required active involvement and sensitivity in seeing how participants reacted to each other's thoughts. I had to sense whether certain topics were too sensitive for others. Kuula (2011, p. 136) reminds that it is important to remember that a mainstream topic can sometimes be too personal for another to share. However, the discussions in shared in the workshops also indicated that participants felt safe and had begun to trust one another. Kurki (2000, pp. 133–136) suggests that by applying small but important rules, such as giving participants equal rights, the animator can break down hierarchies that might otherwise hinder community formation and engagement. There are no exact rules for how each group works; this must be observed and felt

individually for each group (Kurki, 2000, pp. 133–136; Nivala & Rynänen, 2019, p. 206).

In this project, I discussed and agreed upon the schedule daily with the participants, allowing them the freedom to choose a time that suited them best. Several participants recalled the agreed-upon times, which helped them arrive punctually. This approach gave them a sense of power over the situation and ownership of the project. Nivala and Rynänen (2019, p. 205) note that sociocultural animation works by creating a platform where a group of people can form a community. In this project the workshops where the platform and the workshop participants formed their own group that we can call as a first step of community. Participants shared life stories and worked towards the mutually agreed-upon goal of completing a cupboard-installation. According to Kurki (2000, pp. 88–91) Mutual agreement towards a goal is one key element in forming a community. The participants could also express themselves creatively, such as choosing what they painted or molded to represent each workshop topic, like the painting of the heart. This ensured again the feeling of power and agency towards the project and its result.

Placing the workshops in an open, public space where everyone could see the activities, was a carefully considered decision and worked well to encourage participation. It also ensured the participants felt safe as Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio. (2018, p. 135) suggest needs to happen for a community being able to form in ethic. Banks et al. (2013, p. 266) remind us that an ethical approach requires sharing power between researchers and participants. Choosing a familiar and safe location, where participants knew how to get to and leave, ensured that the situation was ethical, with no power imbalances (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 135; Leavy, 2017, p. 237).

The positive feedback participants received from other people at the venue and staff throughout the process made them feel proud. This was only possible by placing the project in a public space. The visibility not only helped with engagement but reminded participants of the project each time they spent time at the

venue. Participant #5 even noted that seeing others paint the cupboard inspired them to join the activity. This demonstrates the power of example. When participants struggled on day three and four with pot-making and painting, my active involvement helped them grasp the activity and overcome their hesitation. Kurki (2000, p. 133) highlights that seeing others participate first is key to sensitizing people to get involved.

Recognizing each participant as an individual helped them feel equal and gave them the freedom to voice their opinions. For example, when participant #3 asked whether they could paint freehand, or participant #5 asked me to set their pots aside, they pushed the boundaries of our communal lines—but did so with permission. By giving their opinions weight, I made them feel heard, and it was clear that their opinions mattered. While I provided boundaries and guidelines by telling what we do, curating the colour range and giving certain materials to use, but I also considered their individual wishes. This approach gave the participants a sense of agency. Nivala and Ryyänen (2018, p. 96) define agency as the will, ability, and possibility to make decisions. Agency means the freedom to choose, which is crucial for communal action. Working towards a mutual goal does not require participants to think or act identically. Diversity is vital, but to ensure that everyone feels valued, space for own opinions must also be provided within the group or community (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2018, p. 96). Nivala and Ryyänen (2019, p. 104) emphasize that it is also important to remember that each individual has the right to choose the agency they take on and how they get involved. What's most important is that interaction and agency roles give everyone an equal opportunity to participate as a valued member of the group and be heard equally (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2019, p. 139).

6.2 Fostering Belonging and Empowerment through Creative Engagement

As said by Nivala and Ryyänen (2018, p. 142) the sense of belonging is a basic human need. Freire (1970, p. 88) goes even further and states that belonging is a core for the feeling of existing. Freire (1970, p. 80) also states that dialogue is the centre of the sense of belonging. During these workshops I aimed to facilitate

constant dialogue. Not only between the participants by steering their conversation, but also by engaging them to make decisions about the theme, position of cupboard, timing when we work and other practical choices made during the workshop. I encouraged participants to actively take ownership over the project, form a small community and see each other's within that.

The way the participants praised each other's accomplishments like colour choice or pots or laughed together over their mistakes or engaged in the stories like where salt actually was from, they engaged in active and ongoing dialogue with each other. Based on Freire's (1970, p. 80) idea, this dialogue made the centre on creating the feeling of belonging. By facilitating these dialogues it can be thought that they enabled the formation of the first steps of a community.

The feeling of belonging can be an unconscious emotion (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2018, p. 142). On the last day at the end of the workshop participant #6 stated that they became a community for a while. They phrased in our end discussion that because they do not belong anywhere else, they made a community themselves. From that can be seen that something unconscious had been happening during those four days, a sense of being one community, feeling of belonging had formed between the participants and the activity implemented.

The staff members and the participants both emphasized several times during the days how important and appreciated it was that this certain group of people, the people experiencing homelessness and having active substance use, are allowed to participate in this kind of a project and research. The staff members stressed how it was important to include the people in actions that are meant for them, and the participants took the possibility of participation almost as a wonder. They seemed to be used to be ignored and not having a possibility to influence in things happening around them. This is good to remember as like Harris and Fiske (2010, p. 848) state the need to be seen can be seen as an equally important basic need as the need to belong somewhere.

By enabling the possibility to choose the subject, choose what to paint, how to paint, what kind of pots to make, what colours to paint them, what pearls to use for decoration, when to meet, whether to talk during the recording, what to share about their own life, the participants were able to feel that they were in control of the situation. Their opinions were valued, and they were equal members of the group. According to Nivala and Ryyänen (2018, p. 141) this is what one needs to have the experience of belonging. Belonging is the interaction between people, but also between people and community. It needs that the person can and is allowed to act as part of a community (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2018, p. 138).

The workshop provided a space for free expression, with shared memories and focused activities fostering a supportive atmosphere. Respecting non-workshop participants' autonomy while maintaining the workshop's integrity ensured a safe environment for all. The core of the profession of the animator is aiming to maintain people's personal safety in this setup.

6.3 Managing Emotional Complexities and the Need for Professional Support

When working with people who actively use substances, there is always a possibility of something surprising and unwanted to happen. Heavy drug use can cause aggressive behaviour and the possibility of various states of mental health problems is always around. This group of people also come from a background with trust issues and many of them have multiple traumas. Consequently, of these factors, the possibility of challenging and surprising moments during a problem are high. Extremely good preparation and predictions for what could happen are crucial. But as we are working with humans, no prediction or preparation can be considered fully and flawless. Leavy (2017, p. 191, 219) also reminds that creative based approaches are always open for surprises and the research processes cannot fully be planned ahead.

During the four days of the workshops there were several surprising and challenging moments. There was for example the moment where participant #3 got very strong emotions during a conversation. Steering the conversation away from

distressing topics in a calmly and maintaining a non-judgmental environment was crucial to steady the tension. When an outsider came and aggressively used the workstation and the paints to paint their own jacket, a similar calm and professional approach was vital to assure the safety of the workshop community. The understanding of professional mindset or the activation of qualified empathy in this situation can help to steer the situation in the right direction. Raatikainen, Rauhala and Mäenpää (2022, p. 411) state that qualified empathy involves strong professional approach and necessitates a blend of compassion and empathetic behaviour, encompassing professional self-assessment, emotional intelligence, and well-defined boundaries. It involves distinguishing between sympathy and empathy, as well as utilizing compassion to engage in empathetic actions. This professional approach was activated in the management of strong emotions arising among the participants and the outsider.

My research data generation plan included the semi-structured recorded interviews. The fact that even the first recorded discussion, did not clearly follow the structure, it lingered in very many different ways, was surprising. I had thought I can manage and steer the discussion in the topics I had planned to. But my choices to record and have the conversation in the workshop setup, might have compromised the whole idea of the discussion. There were interruptions from outsiders, and I had not considered the possibly strong impact a recording might have on the participants. On day three and four the recording was stopped very shortly, only circa 10 minutes, after the beginning. The participant who shut off the recorder on day three said it disturbed their concentration. This might be true, but the recorder might also have awakened trauma of being recorded by an authority. On day four the recording killed all conversation, and it was my own decision to shut it off after a while.

The dual role of facilitator and researcher required balancing active participation with non-intrusive observation to ensure participants' comfort and openness. Efforts to include everyone, but still be also able to collect the data needed for the research created on the best moments a dynamic environment. But it also led into unexcepted moments where the dynamic did not work at all.

For participant #2 and #1 the recording did not seem to evoke any negative feelings and the first day's discussion with them was a good experience. But managing varying interest levels was necessary to keep the community as a whole. Therefore, the decision of shutting off the recorder on day three and four was the right one. As Kuula (2022, p. 21) notes ethical thinking and the weighing the situations from the ethical perspective must be strongly present in these situations. Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio. (2018, p. 45) also remind that verbal communication is not the natural and easiest way to react to situations for everyone. Therefore, it was crucial to note the anxiety the recording woke especially in one participant and to react according to that. It is important to make careful background research to know the subject, before beginning the work (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 118).

People tend to react to different situations in different ways, all interpreting the life around them based on their own experiences, Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio. (2018, p. 16) remind that it is good to remember that sensitivity is also a very subjective matter. For example, crime, sexuality, violence and substance use are considered as sensitive subjects (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p.16). In these moments it is again also good to acknowledge that verbal communication is not the easiest or right one for everyone. Therefore, it is also essential to also consider other methods, like creative, participatory, or visual, to gather information and data. People might not be able to verbalize their feelings, meaning it is vital to also note their non-verbal communication like crying, silence, or agitation (Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio, 2018, p. 45).

The creative activities evoke many feelings and memories in the participants. They shared their childhood stories, memories of their loved ones and their life stories during the workshops. Participant #3 also talked about his conviction and some others openly shared about their crimes that had their lifestyle had led them to. These stories can evoke emotions in the person telling the story, but also in the other participants. As researcher and workshop facilitator it is important to not get too drawn into those emotions. To hold a certain distance, to approach the participants stories with qualified empathy can be helpful when drawing these

professional lines. Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio state (2018, p. 188) that it is vital that the researcher lets themselves to be immersed by the stories, but it is crucial to understand that too big emotions are not helping the participants.

Based on these possibly surprising, and also in many ways challenging moments, it seems to be crucial that in participatory research involving people from backgrounds that might involve trauma and/or heavy substance use, it is important that there is also a social work professional present. This group of people might be facing so called wicked problems, a concept introduced by Rittel and Webber (1973, pp. 10–11) to describe these multifactorial challenges. For these problems there is no simple solution, solving one problem might cause another to rise (Peters, 2017, p. 385) Therefore in research where there is active interaction with people facing wicked problems, it might be important to consider how to proceed once these problems arise during the research process.

A person who has the training in social pedagogy and/or social work is trained to see also the person behind the behaviour and be able to pick up the clues of certain problems and guide the person to the right direction for help. The professional can understand the individual differently as a whole and might be better in understanding the traumatic factors in the background. Therefore, it can be thought that if the researcher themselves does not have a background in social work, it could be good to implement the activities in cooperation with a professional. This way the ethical side of the research can also be ensured and the aspects of the participants that concern their behaviour can be taken in consideration.

6.4 Building Trust and Fostering Ethical Participation

In this study I ensured the ethical approaches on each step throughout the process were as good as it was possible. I have carefully documented the research process and workshops also including the methods, implementation of workshops and data analysis steps. I have adapted the methodologies in this research based on the participants' position and especially on the ethical considerations

specific to this group of people. I chose the methods I used in this research to ensure the flexibility in the ethical and practical choices without compromising the objectivity of the research.

In the workshops I engaged directly with participants without any intermediary which ensured them a platform where they could express themselves authentically. For data generation I used triangulation method, using a variation of different data collection and generation sources such as observation notes, interviews, and journal. During the workshops I maintained regular interaction and reflection with participants, being very sensitive to ensure I notice their possible discomfort and as described above I made decisions where I chose to turn off the recorder to maintain the trust between me and the participants. These decisions were considerably done leaning to the knowledge of Kallinen, Pirskanen and Rautio (2018, p. 45) that it is important to also note the non-verbal communication that can indicate discomfort. I had active interaction and discussion with the participants how they wanted to proceed with the project to make sure their voices are heard and accurately represented, reducing potential bias in interpretation. I noted the power dynamics Leavy (2017, p. 237) talks about between me as a researcher and the participants who are socioeconomically vulnerable position as Salasuo and Rantala (2002, p. 44) describe people having severe substance abuse and experiencing homelessness. During the process I ensured that the power to choose certain aspects of the workshops, like the colours, shapes and the topics of the art piece stayed with the participants. I considered the powershift aspects very carefully during the implementation of the study and followed Granfelt's (1998, p. 41) guidelines to give the participants the power and right to decide what they share. During the whole process of the research the ethics were my main focus and I considered carefully each and every step I took from the ethical point of view.

Initially, I considered using photography as one of the workshop methods. My plan was that the participants would take photographs themselves from chosen subjects. However, after careful consideration, I decided to leave out this element. I did not want the participants' photography to be implemented in indoor

spaces but allowing participants to move outdoors would also have been risking them photographing people who are not involved in the research. Moreover, I made the decision based on the thought that the communal activity and the sense of inclusion needed for sociocultural animation to work (Nivala & Ryyänen, 2000, p. 206) would not have worked if participants would have wandered off to take photos. Ethically, it was also concerning that I would not have been able to control what they photograph, and I would have had to send the photos to an external developer. I was also worried about practical issues, such as disposable cameras potentially being used as a medium of exchange among participants who are actively using substances. Therefore, I found it most straightforward to exclude this element from the project. I ended up documenting the workshops by photographing it with my phone. These photographs are taken so, that the participants' faces are not to be seen and they are used only to show the activities done in the workshops.

I have carefully documented the research process and workshops including also the methods, implementation of workshops and data analysis steps. I have adapted the methodologies in this research based on the participants' position and especially on the ethical considerations specific to this group of people. I chose the methods I used in this research to ensure the flexibility in the ethical and practical choices without compromising the objectivity of the research.

I considered my role as researcher and ensured the research is implemented in a place where I have no professional status. I reflected critically how my presence influenced the data generation process and like Kuula (2022, p. 21) narrates the ethical thinking I have weighted my standpoint as a researcher towards the participants very carefully. When documenting my thoughts on the ethical thinking in my ethical journal, I pondered about practical aspects, but the process also helped me to understand different ethical aspects. The more I considered the ethical aspects I also saw the points where the ethical consideration was difficult. This reflection on my own thoughts and the process itself, made me think about research in a far less simplified way than what I did at the beginning of this study.

As this study proceeded it came for me clear that the ethical landscape in CBPR is not a static setup. It is a dynamic and all the time evolving process. Therefore, the ethical guidelines for this kind of participatory research with people using drugs must be responsive to the changing and unique challenges and contexts of marginalized populations. As Banks et al. (2013, p. 266) say that the relationship and interaction between ethics, power and the whole group dynamic in a community are very complex and require continuous reflection and adaptation. Researchers must engage strongly in this ethical reflection from the beginning until the end of the research. It is important to recognize what is acceptable or ethical and as Kuula (2011, p. 136) mentions this might vary depending on the cultural, situational, or personal contexts. Edwards (2021, p. 5) notes that as researcher I must take the responsibility how I interact and interpret the community I work with during the research.

This research points out the need for ethical guidelines tailored to the specific situations (when working with people using drugs) occurring during the study. For example, a clear guideline how to proceed when the interview gets interrupted and continuing it is ethically not sustainable. The ongoing commitment to ethical reflection would improve the quality of research and in the long run also create wellbeing to the specific group the research is done with as their life situation is taken into consideration when implementing the research itself. As researcher I must acknowledge the responsibility when creating the narratives and environments where the research is conducted. By prioritizing ethical matters over the data generation, I can foster relationships based on trust and collaboration. Creating this safe space is important in establishing a platform where the participants can express themselves without fear of stigma. Also, the physical setting of the research project should foster engagement and go through ethical consideration. The space should be chosen to be inviting and non-judgmental and the reasonings behind the decision should always be made from the participants' perspective. For example, in this study the chosen physical space was a place where the participants visited on a regular basis and therefore, I could consider it to be a safe and familiar place for them.

Maintaining the anonymity plays an important role in CBPR with people using drugs. Researchers should follow the ethical guidelines to protect the sensitive information ensuring the participants feel secure to participate. At the same time it would be crucial to have clear guidelines of the ethical process within the research with this specific group of people to ensure that the researchers do not abandon their research when facing the too complicated ethical formalities. Edwards (2021, p. 5) stresses that to proceed in an ethical way researchers should find ways to point out to the participants the exact ways where and in what ways their participation is used in the research.

Although the participants in this study chose not to engage in the analysis of the generated data, involving and at least offering the possibility to engage in it is vital in the context of participatory research. It is important to recognize that this might not always be possible, but it would enrich the findings and give the research even stronger ethical ground. Research should be conducted on how participants could be easier engaged and involved in the analysis with lower barriers.

The findings of this research stress that practical and ethical considerations must be carefully cared about throughout the whole process of participation. Therborn (2012, p. 579) points out the danger of inequality. When doing research, it is crucial to remember the position of researcher and participants, and as Therborn (2012, p. 579) points out, remember that inequality is a condition that goes against the moral principle of equal treatment for all human beings.

When writing the findings in a narrative form, I chose to use this very different style to clarify the difference between the narratives and the research text. The narratives are all based on my notes, ethical journal, and interview transcripts. But even when they are based on this generated data, they are my own interpretation of the workshops and the interaction and feelings that happened during them. Struggling first to find ethical way to tell these narratives and at the same time secure the anonymity of the participants led me to choose this almost poetical approach. I also chose to use they/them as pronoun as the gender of the

participants did not play any role in the research and by using they/them and #number instead of name I could assure higher anonymity to the participants.

Kallinen et al remind (2018, p. 141) that when personal narratives and sensitive details are not included in the research, the inherent vulnerability of participants necessitates a heightened awareness of ethical practices. This awareness extends beyond the research design to encompass the entire process of engagement with participants. In future researcher must remain adjusted to the emotional and psychological states of their participants, fostering an atmosphere of trust and safety. For this to be consistent and clear, more research in this field needs to be done where the key moments of ethical consideration can be spotted and guidelines created.

Looking back on this study, I can see a clear opportunity and need to connect creative approaches with social care, and to show how research can act as a bridge between these two sides. By prioritizing empathy, and real collaboration with participants and social care workers, research like this can provide a model for compassionate, ethical, and respectful engagement. This “compassion-led” way of doing research would not only be about gathering data but creating a safe space where participants feel understood and supported. Instead of following rigid research steps, empathy and ethical reflection guide each decision, adapting to participants’ comfort levels and needs including creative ways to implement the data generation. This approach would not just produce insight, it would help build trust and foster meaningful connections. In the future, research done in this way could serve as a practical example of how to involve vulnerable groups in a way that is ethical, respectful, and genuinely compassionate.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent Form

TUTKITTAVAN SUOSTUMUS

Tutkimuksen nimi:

Siltojen rakentaminen yhteisössä: Yhteisöllisen ajattelun edistäminen asunnottomuutta kokevien ihmisten keskuudessa luovalla ja osallistavalla tutkimusotteella.

Tutkimuksen toteuttaja:

Metropolia ammattikorkeakoulu, Annuska Dal Maso, xxxxxxx, annuska.dalmaso@metropolia.fi

Metropolia ammattikorkeakoulu, Tohtori Sanna Kivijärvi, sanna.kivijarvi@metropolia.fi

Minua on pyydetty osallistumaan yllämainittuun tutkimukseen, jonka tarkoituksena on tutkia millaisia haasteita on osallistava asunnottomuutta kokevia ja päihderiippuvuudesta kärsiviä ihmisiä osallistamaan tutkimukseen. Miten tutkijat voivat varmistaa, että osallistujien äänet kuullaan ja heidän kokemuksiaan kunnioitetaan tutkimusprosessin aikana? Miten tutkijat tasapainoilevat eettisten näkökohtien ja tutkimusprosessin käytännön vaatimusten välillä?

Olen saanut tiedotteen tutkimuksesta ja ymmärtänyt sen. Tiedotteesta olen saanut riittävän selvityksen tutkimuksesta, sen tarkoituksesta ja toteutuksesta, oikeuksistani sekä tutkimuksen mahdollisesti liittyvistä hyödyistä ja riskeistä. Minulla on ollut mahdollisuus esittää kysymyksiä ja olen saanut riittävän vastauksen kaikkiin tutkimusta koskeviin kysymyksiini.

Olen saanut tiedot tutkimukseen mahdollisesti liittyvästä henkilötietojen keräämisestä, käsittelystä ja luovuttamisesta ja minun on ollut mahdollista tutustua tutkimuksen tietosuojaselosteeseen.

Osallistun tutkimukseen vapaaehtoisesti. Minua ei ole painostettu eikä houkutteltu osallistumaan tutkimukseen.

Minulla on ollut riittävästi aikaa harkita osallistumistani tutkimukseen.

Ymmärrän, että osallistumiseni on vapaaehtoista ja että voin peruuttaa tämän suostumukseni koska tahansa syytä ilmoittamatta. Olen tietoinen siitä, että mikäli keskeytän (voin jatkaa sitä myöhemmin) tutkimuksen, keskeyttämiseen asti kerätyjä tietoja voidaan käyttää tutkimuksessa.

Allekirjoituksellani vahvistan osallistumiseni tähän tutkimukseen.

Jos tutkimukseen liittyvien henkilötietojen käsittelyperusteena on suostumus, vahvistan allekirjoituksellani suostumukseni myös henkilötietojeni käsittelyyn. Minulla on oikeus peruuttaa suostumukseni tietosuojaselosteessa kuvatulla tavalla.

Allekirjoitus :

Alkuperäinen allekirjoitettu tutkittavan suostumus sekä kopio tutkimustiedotteesta liitteineen jäävät tutkijan arkistoon. Tutkimustiedote liitteineen ja kopio allekirjoitetusta suostumuksesta annetaan tutkittavalle.

Appendix 2: Thesis agreement

TIEDOTE TUTKIMUKSESTA

Perspektiivien yhteenpunominen: Yhteisöllisen ajattelun edistäminen kodittomien yksilöiden keskuudessa luovuuteen perustuvalla lähestymistavalla, mukaan lukien osallistava tutkimus.

Bridging Perspectives: Fostering communal thinking among homeless Individuals through creativity-based approach including participatory research.

Pyyntö osallistua tutkimukseen

Teitä pyydetään mukaan tutkimukseen, jossa tutkitaan miten osallistavaa tutkimusta tulee tehdä ja mitä haasteita siinä on kun kohderyhmänä ovat asunnottomuutta kokevat, aktiivisesti päihteitä käyttävät ihmiset. Olemme arvioineet, että sovellutte tutkimukseen, koska kertomanne mukaan sovitte kyseiseen kohderyhmään. Tämä tiedote kuvaa tutkimusta ja teidän osuuttanne siinä. Perehdyttyänne tähän tiedotteeseen teille järjestetään mahdollisuus esittää kysymyksiä tutkimuksesta, jonka jälkeen teiltä pyydetään suostumus tutkimukseen osallistumisesta.

Vapaaehtoisuus

Tutkimukseen osallistuminen on täysin vapaaehtoista. Kieltäytyminen ei vaikuta oikeuksiinne, kohteluunne tai saamaanne apuun VVA ry:ltä.

Voitte myös keskeyttää tutkimuksen koska tahansa syytä ilmoittamatta. Mikäli keskeytätte tutkimuksen tai peruutatte suostumuksen, teistä keskeyttämiseen ja suostumuksen peruuttamiseen mennessä kerättyjä tietoja ja näytteitä voidaan käyttää osana tutkimusaineistoa.

Tutkimuksen tarkoitus

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tutkia, miten osallistaa asunnottomuutta kokevia ja päihderiippuvuudesta kärsiviä ihmisiä osallistavaan tutkimusprosessiin.

Tutkimuksen toteuttajat

Tutkijana toimii Annuska Dal Maso ja hän tekee opinnäytetyön osana Luovuus ja taide sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden tutkimuskeskusta Metropolia ammattikorkeakoulussa.

Yhteistyökumppanina tutkimukselle toimii Vailla vakinaista asuntoa ry.

Tutkimusmenetelmät ja toimenpiteet

Tutkimus suoritetaan osana luovien menetelmien työpajaprojektia. Työpajoihin osallistuvat haastatellaan projektin alussa, keskivaiheilla ja lopussa.. Tutkimuksen kokonaiskesto on n. 1.5 vuotta, josta aineistonkeruun toteutus n. 1-2 kuukautta.

Tutkimuksen aikana tehdään yhteisötaideprojekti. Tämä tehdään päivittäin toistuvissa työpajoissa noin kuukauden ajan. Työpajojen lopputuloksena syntyy taideteos Vailla vakinaista asuntoa ry:n Vapaaehtois- ja vertaistoiminnan keskuksen Vepan -toimipisteen tiloihin. Projektiin osallistujat päättävät itse teoksen aiheen. Tutkimukseen osallistutaan työpajatoiminnan ohessa. Ennen projektin alkamista, sen keskivaiheilla ja lopussa pidetään osallistujille ryhmähaastattelu joka nauhoitetaan. Ryhmähaastatteluiden tarkoituksena on toimia foorumina tehokkaiden lähestymistapojen ja toimintamallien tarkasteluun ja arvioida todellisen osallistamisen tapoja osallistavassa lähestymistavassa. Lisäksi aineistoa kerätään havainnoimalla. Havaintoja tehdään videoimalla työskentelyä sekä kirjoittamalla tutkimuspäiväkirjaa.

Tutkimuksen mahdolliset hyödyt

Mahdolliset osallisuuden tunteet kasvavat

Tutkimuksesta mahdollisesti seuraavat haitat ja epämukavuudet

Ei odotettavissa olevaa haittaa

Kustannukset ja niiden korvaaminen

Tutkimukseen osallistuminen ei maksa teille mitään. Osallistumisesta ei myöskään makseta erillistä korvausta.

Tutkittavien vakuutusturva

Tutkittava ei ole vakuutettu

Tutkimustuloksista tiedottaminen

Koska kyseessä on osallistava tutkimus, aineistonanalyysi toteutetaan yhdessä osallistujien kanssa. Tutkimus on opinnäytetyö ja sen tulokset julkaistaan osana opinnäytetyötä Theseus-tietokannassa.

Tutkimuksen päättyminen

Myös tutkimuksen suorittaja voi keskeyttää tutkimuksen jos tutkimuksen aikana tapahtuu jotain odottamatonta joka estää tutkijan jatkamasta tutkimusta terveydellisistä syistä. Jos tutkimuksen aikana esiintyy väkivaltaa, uhkailua tai yhteistyökumppanin omaisuuden rikkomista, voidaan tutkimus keskeyttää.

Lisätiedot

Pyydämme teitä tarvittaessa esittämään tutkimukseen liittyviä kysymyksiä opinnäytetyöntekijälle tai siitä vastaavalle henkilölle.

Tutkijoiden yhteystiedot

Opinnäytetyöntekijä
Nimi: Annuska Dal Maso
Puh. xxxxxxxxxxxx
Sähköposti: annuska.dalmaso@metropolia.fi

Opinnäytetyön ohjaaja
Titteli: Tohtori
Nimi: Sanna Kivijärvi/ Metropolia/kulttuurihyvinvointi
Sähköposti: sanna.kivijarvi@metropolia.fi

Tutkimuksen tietosuojaseloste: Henkilötietojen käsittely tutkimuksessa

Tässä tutkimuksessa käsitellään teitä koskevia henkilötietoja voimassa olevan tietosuojalainsäädännön (EU:n yleinen tietosuoja-astus, 679/2016, ja voimassa oleva kansallinen lainsäädäntö) mukaisesti. Seuraavassa kuvataan henkilötietojen käsittelyyn liittyvät asiat.

Tutkimuksen rekisterinpitäjä

Rekisterinpitäjällä tarkoitetaan tahoa, joka yksin tai yhdessä toisten kanssa määrittelee henkilötietojen käsittelyn tarkoitukset ja keinot. Rekisterinpitäjä voi olla korkeakoulu, toimeksiantaja, muu yhteistyötaho, opinnäytetyöntekijä tai jotkut edellä mainituista yhdessä (esim. korkeakoulu ja opinnäytetyöntekijä yhdessä).

Tässä tutkimuksessa henkilötietojen rekisterinpitäjä on:

Korkeakoulu ja opinnäytetyöntekijä

Voitte kysyä lisätietoja henkilötietojenne käsittelystä rekisterinpitäjän yhteyshenkilöltä

Rekisterinpitäjän yhteyshenkilön nimi: Annuska Dal Maso
Organisaatio: Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulu
Puh. xxxxxxxxxxxx
Sähköposti: annuska.dalmaso@metropolia.fi

Tutkimuksessa teistä kerätään seuraavia henkilötietoja

Tutkimuksessa henkilötietoa syntyy teemahaastattelun nauhoittamisesta sekä mahdollisesta työpajatyöskentelyn havainnoinnista videoaineiston muodossa,

jossa osallistujan ääni ja kasvot saattavat olla tunnistettavissa, jolloin se tulkitaan henkilötiedoksi. Muita tunnistetietoja haastateltavista ei kerätä aineistonkeruun yhteydessä.

Teillä ei ole sopimukseen tai lakisääteiseen tehtävään perustuvaa velvollisuutta toimittaa henkilötietojanne vaan osallistuminen on täysin vapaaehtoista. Työpajatyöskentelystä otettuun videokuvaan teiltä pyydetään erikseen kirjallinen lupa. Vain kirjallisen luvan antaneita kuvataan havainnointia varten. Jos ette anna lupaa kuvaamiseen, suoritetaan kuvaaminen siten, ettei teitä näy materiaalissa

Tutkimuksessa kerätään henkilötietojanne myös seuraavista lähteistä

Tutkimuksessa ei kerätä henkilötietojanne muista lähteistä.

Henkilötietojenne suojausperiaatteet

Nauhoitteita käsitellään ainoastaan Metropolian suojatuilla alustoilla, joissa on käytössä henkilökohtainen käyttäjätunnus ja salasanasuojaus. Tutkijalla ei ole avustajaa eikä ohjaajalla ole pääsyä raakadataan. Haastattelujen ja mahdollisten videointien nauhoittaminen toteutetaan tietoturvalisest.

Henkilötietojenne käsittelyn tarkoitus

Henkilötietojenne käsittelyn tarkoitus on tutkimusaineiston keruu tutkimukseen. Käsittelyperuste on haastatteluun osallistuvan suostumus.

Tutkimuksen kesto aika (henkilötietojenne käsittelyaika)

Tutkimus kestää 31.12.2024 asti.

Mitä henkilötiedoillenne tapahtuu tutkimuksen päätyttyä?

Tutkimusaineisto tuhoetaan viimeistään vuosi tutkimuksen päättymisen jälkeen, viimeistään 31.12.2025.

Rekisteröitynä teillä on oikeus

Koska henkilötietojanne käsitellään tässä tutkimuksessa, niin olette rekisteröity tutkimuksen aikana muodostuvassa henkilörekisterissä.

- saada informaatiota henkilötietojen käsittelystä
- tarkastaa itseänne koskevat tiedot
- oikaista tietojanne
- poistaa tietonne (esim. jos peruutatte antamanne suostumuksen)
- peruuttaa antamanne henkilötietojen käsittelyä koskeva suostumus

- rajoittaa tietojenne käsittelyä
- rekisterinpitäjän ilmoitusvelvollisuus henkilötietojen oikaisusta, poistosta tai käsittelyn rajoittamisesta
- tehdä valitus tietosuojavaltuutetun toimistoon, jos katsotte, että henkilötietojanne on käsitelty tietosuojalainsäädännön vastaisesti

Jos henkilötietojen käsittely tutkimuksessa ei edellytä rekisteröidyn tunnistamista ilman lisätietoja eikä rekisterinpitäjä pysty tunnistamaan rekisteröityä, niin oikeutta tietojen tarkastamiseen, oikaisuun, poistoon, käsittelyn rajoittamiseen, ilmoitusvelvollisuuteen ja siirtämiseen ei sovelleta.

Voitte käyttää oikeuksianne ottamalla yhteyttä rekisterinpitäjään
Tutkimuksessa kerättyjä henkilötietoja ei käytetä profilointiin tai automaattiseen päätöksentekoon

Henkilötietojen käsittely aineistoa analysoitaessa ja tutkimuksen tuloksia raportoitaessa

Kerättyä tietoa ja tutkimusaineistoa käsitellään luottamuksellisesti lainsäädännön edellyttämällä tavalla. Yksittäisille tutkittavalle annetaan tunnuskoodi ja häntä koskevat tiedot säilytetään koodattuina tutkimusaineistossa. Aineisto analysoidaan koodattuna ja tulokset raportoidaan ryhmätasolla, jolloin yksittäinen henkilö ei ole tunnistettavissa ilman koodiavainta. Koodiavainta, jonka avulla yksittäisen tutkittavan tiedot ja tulokset voidaan tunnistaa, säilyttää Annuska Dal Maso maksimissaan 31.12.2025 asti eikä tietoja anneta tutkimuksen ulkopuolisille henkilöille.

Appendix 3: Ethical Journal

27.3.2024

Ensimmäinen työpajapäivä ohitse.

kamalan paljon tunteita. Ennen kaikkea positiivisia. Sain jo heti ensimmäisenä päivänä osallistutettua 4 ihmistä, joka on mielestäni valtavan paljon. Koin ehkä suurinta painetta siinä, että osaan selittää osallistujille tarpeeksi hyvin mihin he osallistuvat ja varmistamaan että he ymmärtävät saavansa jättää tutkimukseen osallistumisen kesken jos he niin kokevat.

toinen tilanne joka näin jälkikäteen mietityttää paljon, on se että koska päätin että on lähestyttävämpää tehdä haastattelut työn lomassa kuin erikseen, antauduin myös sille, että haastattelu ei pysynyt erityisen strukturoituna. Se polveili ja oli ehkä enemmän keskustelu kuin haastattelu. Luokittelenko heidät etukäteen jo liian epäjohdonmukaisesti ei kykeneväiseksi osallistumaan vai oliko tämä oikea ratkaisu? Sitä on vaikea tietää, tiedän vain että he olivat tyytyväisiä työpajaan, mutta itse äänitetty aineisto on kovin polveilevaa.

Äänityksen ollessa päällä huomasin myös itse hieman tuskastuvani jos ihmiset eivät vastanneet kysymykseeni suoraan vaan keskustelu lähti elämään omaa elämäänsä. En pistänyt liikoja vastaan, mutta huomasin ajattelevani, etten pysty viemään keskustelua välttämättä siihen suuntaan mihin olin ajatellut sitä viedä.

Toisaalta, tässä voimme miettiä että tutkijana, minun on oltava tietoinen miksi haluaisin että keskustelu menee tiettyyn suuntaan. Olisiko ollut eettisesti kestävä pakottaa osallistujat vastaamaan asettamiini kysymyksiin, olisiko se ollut johdattelua? Haastattelu oli kuitenkin puolistrukturoitu ja tarkoituksena on ennen kaikkea tutkia sitä miten ihmiset toimivat osallistavassa tutkimuksessa ja mitä ovat eettiset näkökulmat siihen.

Katkaisin nauhoituksen siinä vaiheessa kun yksi osallistujista alkoi kiihtymään ja hän alkoi myös puhua aika rasistisesti. Muut osallistujat hiljenivät silloin ja jouduin hetkeksi laittamaan sivuun tutkijan roolini ja olemaan läsnä ennen kaikkea

kohtaavan työn työntekijänä. tilanne rauhoittui ja kaikki pystyivät jatkamaan maalaamista rauhassa.

Jälkeenpäin mietin onko eettisesti kestäväää laittaa tutkiojita ilman ammattilaista vastaavaan tilanteeseen. Jos minulla ei olisi molempia rooleja, mtien tilanne silloin etenisi?

Onko se oikein muita osallistujia kohtaan, onko se oikein tutkimusta kohtaan?

Ihmiset myös avautuivat tekemisen lomassa elämästään. Ihmissuhteistaan, tuomioistaan. Mietin miten se vaikuttaa suhtautumiseen. Jos tutkija ei ole ammattilainen, joka osaa sopivasti etäännyttää itsensä ihmisen elämäntilanteesta ja -tarinasta, alkaako hän sääliä.

tääm on se kun ammatillisella empatialla on tilauksensa ja sen aktivoiminen auttaa selviämään tilanteista, jotka muuten voisivat olla eettisesti kyseenalaisia.

Onko oikein että tutkija saa kuulla nämä tilanteet, ne ehkä dokumentoidaan ja ymmärtävätkö osallistuja oikeasti kertomustan mahdolliset seuraukset eli sen että niitä käytetään osana jonkin ilmiön tutkimista.

toisaalta kehiin tulee se ikuisuuskyseymys siitä, että jos me emme kuule ja dokumentoi näitä elämäntarinoita, me samalla ikään kuin sanomme että ne eivät ole tapahtuneet tai eivät ole sen arvoisia.

eihän tutkija voi päättää aikuisen ihmisen kohdalla saako hän kertoa karuista elämäntapahtumistaan vai ei.

tutkijan itse pitää pystyä etäännyttämään itsensä tilaanteesta niin etteivät tarinat vaikuta hänen tapaansa suhtautua ihmiseen sen jälkeen.

*jos osallistuja kertoo odottavansa tuomiota taposta, ei se saa vaikuttaa siihen miten häneen suhtaudutaan loppuprojektissa. **Mutta samaan aikaan kerrottu on luottamuksen osoitus ja traumatietoisuus tulee silloin ottaa huomioon.***

2.4.2024

päivä kaksi.

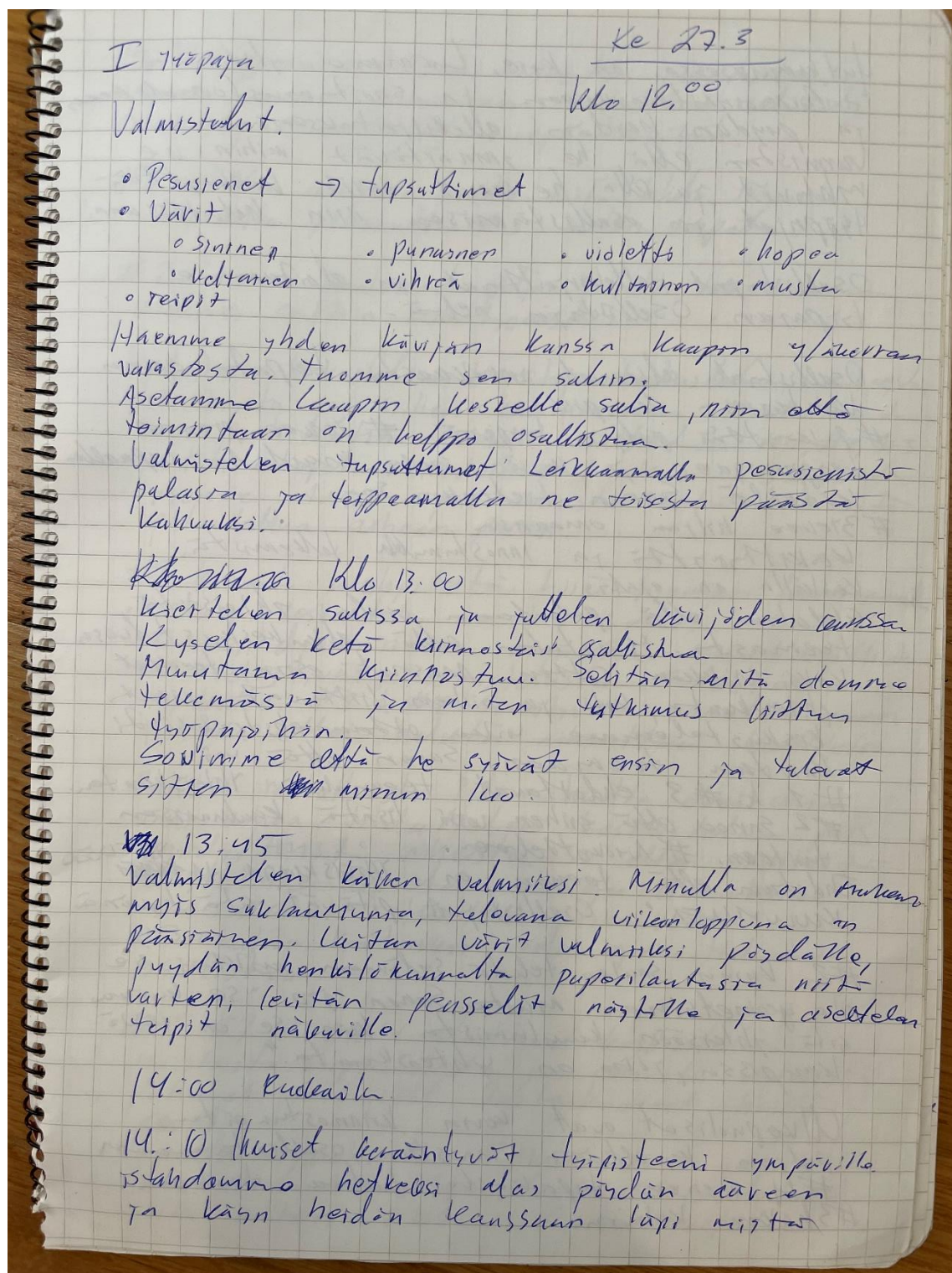
Tähän päivään oli rento asenne lähteä, vaikka jännitti taas osallistuuko ihmisiä, kun edellisestä työpajasta oli jo useampi päivä aikaa.

Mietin olisiko pitänyt varmistaa etukäteen että ihmiset varmasti tietävät minä päivänä jatkamme. Toisaalta mietin myös että ajanhallinta ei ole heidän vahvuutensa, joten ei sillä olisi välttämättä ollut merkitystä.

Sain heti alusta uusia ihmisiä osallistumaan. Jälleen näin paljon vaivaa selittääkseni tietosuojaselosteet ja varmistaakseni että he ymmärtävät mihin osallistuvat. Kaksi heistä allekirjoitti sopimuksen nopeasti, perehtymättä siihen syvemmin. pysäytin heidät molemmat ennen työskentely alkua ja luin sopimukset heidän kanssaan vielä ääneen. Toinen tunnustukin sitten että hänellä on huono näkö eikä hän näe pientä tekstiä kovin hyvin.

jotta tämäkin asia olisi saavutettavissa ja eettisesti kestävä on siis varmistettava että teksti on sellaista että jokainen voi sen lukea. Tai se luetaan hänelle.

Appendix 4: Workshop Journal



Jatkamuksessa on kyse, luonno yhdessä
informaatiolomakkeen ja suostumuslomakkeen
ja pyydän heidän allekirjituksensa
varmistun että he suostuvat mihin ne
ryhtyvät ja että he saavat myös koskettua
työryhmät ja osallistavissa niin halutessaan.

Osallistajat allekirjittavat ja aloittamaan
työryhmän. Osallistajien retri.

Osallistajat allekirjittavat ja aloittamaan
kohtaamisen kaupissa.

#1 kysytään paljon teippiä. # tekoo pienen
teippiä ja kysyy saako muutama osualla
kädellä. Sanon tietenkin saa.

#3 tulee hiljaa omaansa
koskettamaan ja innostamalla tekemistä.
Kaikkilla on ajatus.

Ehdotan että puhutaan vielä yhteisestä
teemasta. Muistutan että alku keskus teemassa
kaksi viikkoa sitten nousivat esille teemat
yhteiskunta, koti ja siihen liittyvät asiat.
Keskus teemamme viikko ottaa abstraktisesti
kannan teemaan. Sanon että voi.

#1 & #3 ehdottavat teemaksi yhteiskunta
#2 sanoo että siihen voisi lisätä kuulumisen
tunteen. # viikutteloo.

Ehdotan että teema on "Yhteiskunta ja ^{Yhteisö}~~teema~~
kuulumisen". Osallistajat pitävät siitä hyvänä.

#2 kysyy saako tehdä sydämen, viikkoon se
ole geometrisen muoto. Sanon joo. "se kuvaa
sitten yhteisöön kuulumista kun se on tässä
kaupissa, jolloin on yhteiskunta."

Ulko puolisat ovat kovan kiinnostuneita,
paljon kysellen. Innostan osallistamaan

#4 menee tupakkalle, haluaa tulla
#3 haluaa vahvuu.

Appendix 5: Analysis Table 1 and 2

TABLE 1.

Analyzing ethical, professional and practical situation during the thesis process

Work phase	et- hi- cal sit ua tio n	pr of es- si- on al sit ua tio n	pr ac- ti- cal sit uat ion
Workshop day 1	7	8	5
Workshop day 2	7	3	12
Workshop day 3	5	5	8
Workshop day 4	3	3	2

ethical situations:

filling in consent form and making sure everyone understand what it says,

participants avoiding conflict,

conversation about private life and memories,

ending recording and not finishing the interview

Inclusion

Societal factors

Professional situations:

Animating people to join the workshop

Allowing people to come and go for a smoke

**Being able to navigate through dynamic change in group
after one gets heated up**

Dealing with a possibly aggressive situation

Waking people up to join the workshop

Inclusion

understanding the societal status and problems

Practical situations:

**Choosing to have the workshop in the middle of the
venue**

Other people might just come and use your material

**Allowing the workshop to happen in a open space so it is
easy to join by bystanders also**

**Making agreement when we continue at the end of the
day so the participants will remember**

Participating

The feelings recording can evoke

Choosing and preparing materials everyone can use

Understanding the practicality of ending recording

Placing of final art piece

Choosing after lunch -time for workshop

Weather effects

Outsider being able to use materials

TABLE 2.

Type of situation

	ethical	professional	practical
privacy related	4	1	2
space related	1	2	5
rules related	2		4
research related	4	1	4
person related	3	2	4

ethical situations:

filling in consent form and making sure everyone understand what it says,
 participants avoiding conflict,
 conversation about private life and memories,
 ending recording and not finishing the interview

Professional situations:

Animating people to join the workshop
 Allowing people to come and go for a smoke
 Being able to navigate through dynamic change in group after one gets heated
 up
 Dealing with a possibly aggressive situation

Practical situations:

Choosing to have the workshop in the middle of the venue
 Other people might just come and use your material
 Allowing the workshop to happen in a open space so it is easy to join by by-
 standers
 Making agreement when we continue at the end of the day so the participants
 will remember