

Project CREATE

Creating Research Ecologies to Advance Transdisciplinary Learning on arts-based programs through the study of adolescent loneliness

A UKRI Adolescent Mental Health and the Developing Mind Project



Mechanisms of Change in Community Participatory Arts Programmes: The Experiences of Young People

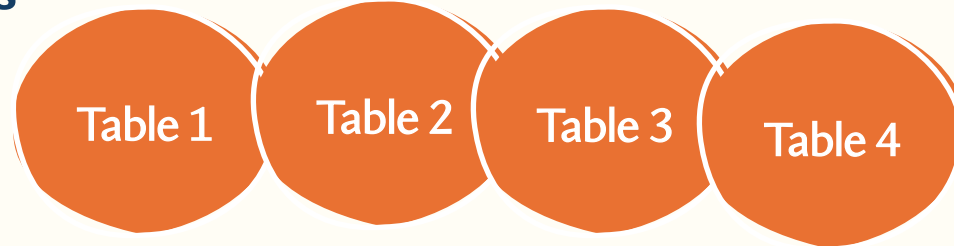
Introduction to this Create work



Invitation into Artmaking: Experience Mechanisms



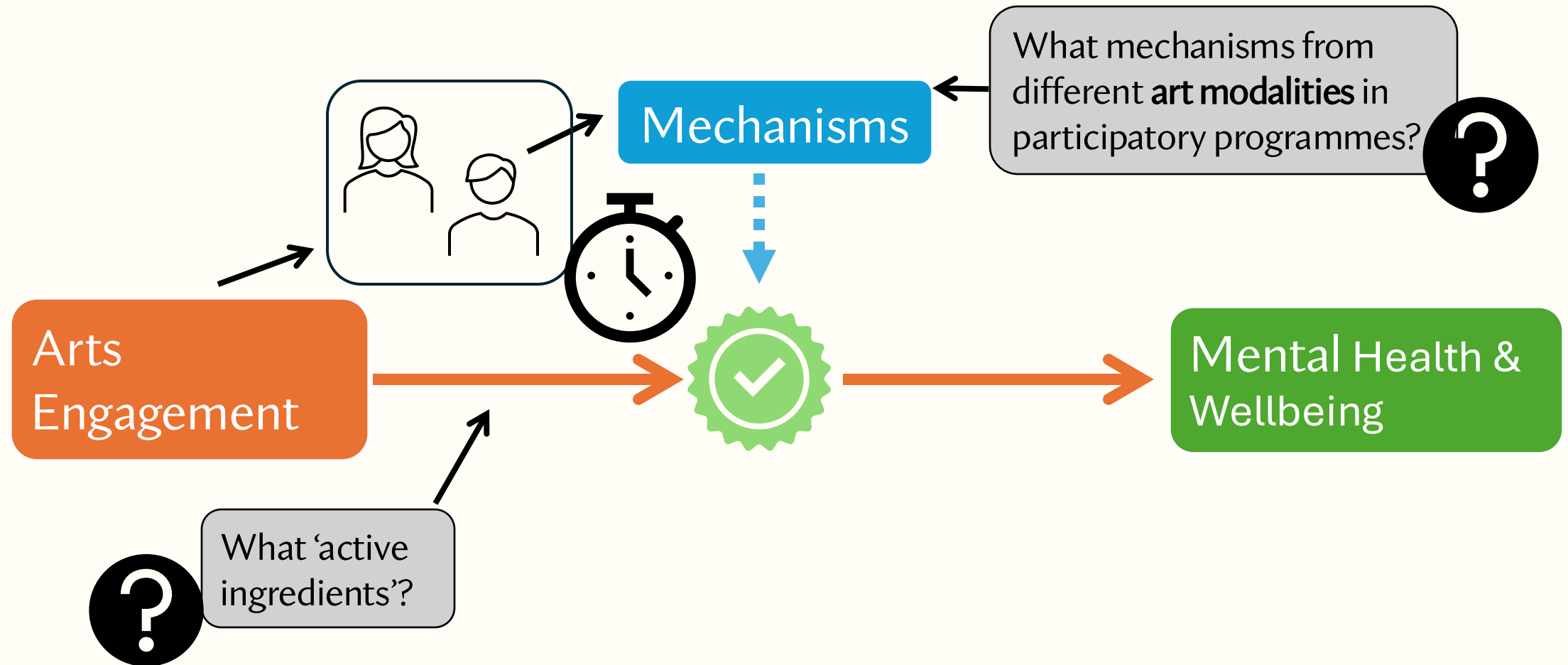
Final Thoughts



MAY 28TH, 2026



What did we want to understand?



Living Labs

day / weekend

reaching 42 young people, 6 artists

Highly condensed programmes

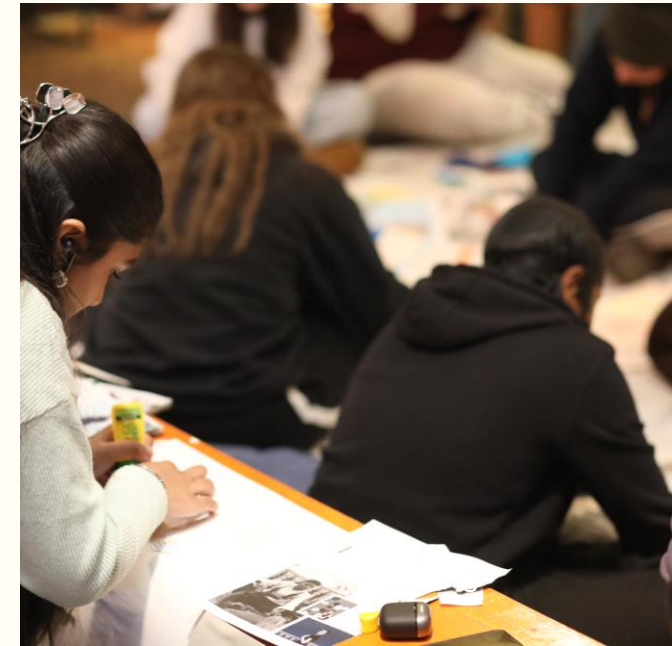
Music, Movement, Filmmaking,
Photography, Painting

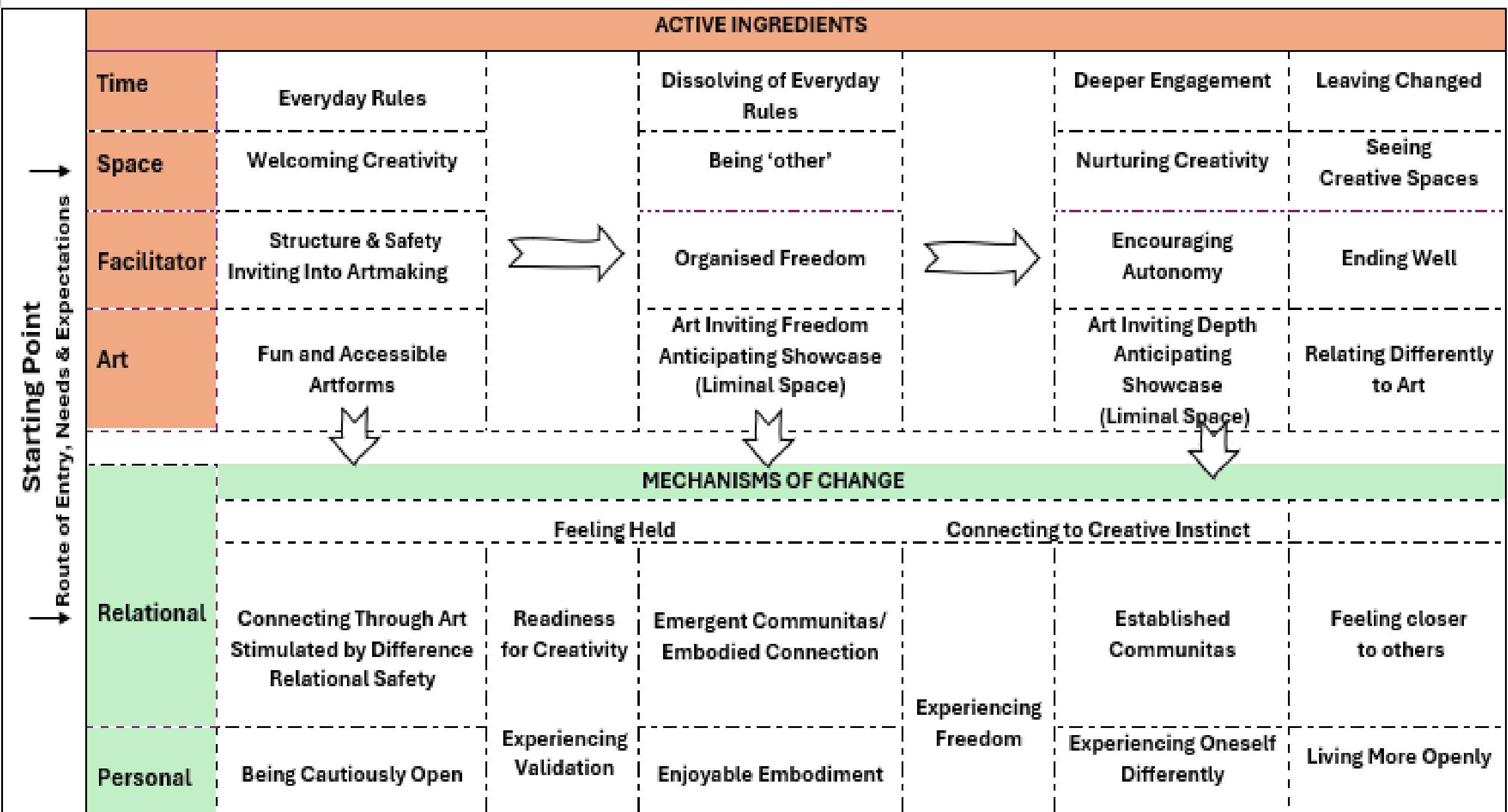
Experience Sampling

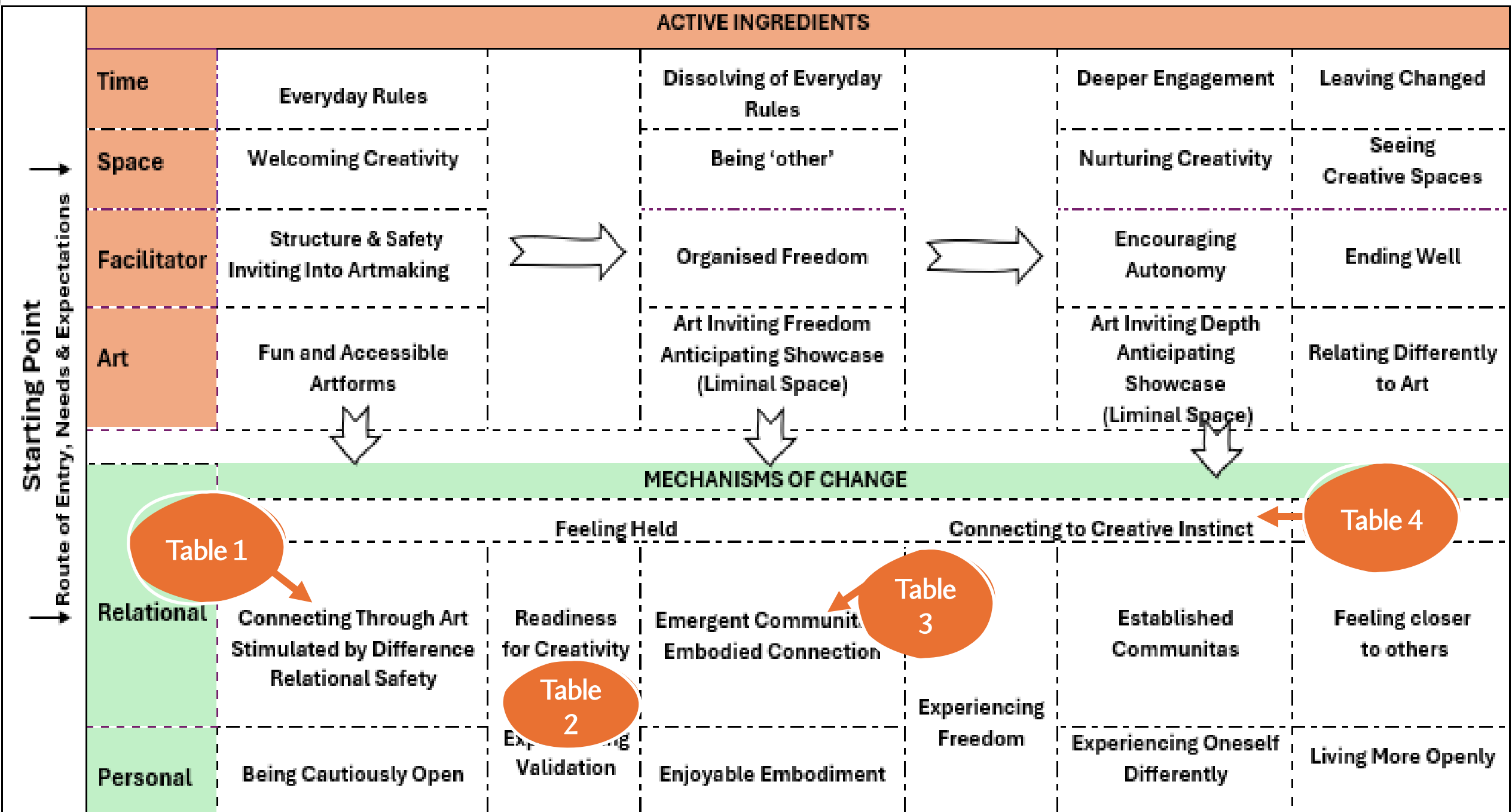
Hypothesis testing from [our systematic review of published PAB community programmes.](#)

What is happening right now?

Captured in diaries and discussion
Detailed, systematic data analysis
Logic Model: synergistic, non-linear







Final Thoughts



- Inadequacy of linear model but could help 'designing in' active ingredients; improved evaluation for evidence generation; investment
- **Conclusions**
 - PA programmes in validating, youth-friendly settings, have strong potential to strengthen youth mental health. Setting and skilled facilitation are active (not optional) ingredient
 - Similarities between clinical therapeutic processes (person-centred counselling) and PA processes. Relational & trust foundational to 'release potential'. Arts practitioners create a non-judgmental, accepting, protected space for young people in which they feel able to reconnect positively to their thoughts, feelings, bodies and identities.
 - Creative programmes build protective factors: self-awareness, emotional regulation, psychological flexibility, belonging, creativity, positive self-image, identity and accomplishment - achieved on the young person's own terms.
 - Different art forms may produce different wellbeing benefits; offering choice matters.
 - Embedding creative health within Young Futures Hubs is a strategic opportunity to make creativity accessible and strengthen prevention.

Get in Touch



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