

Working in Mental Health – Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- Involve staff with the planning of the project. Agree aims and objectives with staff beforehand.
- Set boundaries. Make sure everyone knows what's expected of you and what you expect of them.
- Ensure that the most appropriate people have been chosen for your project and risk assessments have been carried out.
- Ensure that you are informed of any potential behavioural difficulties beforehand and have a strategy for what to do if they occur.
- Ensure you have an adequate knowledge of fire/attack alarm systems.
- Familiarise yourself with the relevant policies of the place where you are working.
- Have a member of staff nearby at all times. If doing one to one work, tell a member of staff where you are and who you're with.
- Pass on any disclosed information that has a direct bearing on anyone's well-being and tell the person who gave you the information you that you will have to do this.
- Establish a source of supervision and support. Evaluate your work and get feedback.
- Remember you're not there to help people get better or to solve their problems. You're there to inspire them and to help them create.
- Put your own emotional wellbeing first: fit your own mask before anyone else's.
- Have fun! It rubs off.

DON'T:

- Advise or intervene in any way with an individual's mental health. You're an artist, not a mental health service.
- Allow prior knowledge of individual's condition or history prejudice the nature of your interactions with them.
- Refrain from referring problems to members of staff, or asking what might be stupid questions.
- Discuss confidential information with anyone who doesn't need to know it.
- Disclose private or sensitive information about yourself.
- Agree to keep information a secret if it has a direct bearing on anyone's wellbeing.
- Ask people to disclose personal information.