



COMMUNITY CreativITEA chat create connect

In celebration of Ben Lomond's recent status of astronomical importance, activities were based around the stars!

WHO

ARTS NORTH WEST is the regional arts development organisation for the New England North West of NSW based in Glen Innes. Arts North West supports and develops arts and cultural initiatives across the region connecting creative communities.

WHAT

COMMUNITY CREATIVITEA: CHAT CONNECT CREATE is a series of art workshops for the community of Ben Lomond which introduces and engages the therapeutic benefits of art-making such as freedom of expression and creativity, stress relief and a distraction from the everyday realities of rural life in drought affected areas. This project was funded by the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal and the Yulgilbar Foundation

WHERE

BEN LOMOND is a small village located in the New England area of NSW with a population of 436. Ben Lomond is located in Armidale Regional Council and is 62km north of Armidale, 32km south of Glen Innes and 571km north of Sydney. The catchment of Ben Lomond includes the small settlements of Llangothlin, Tibbamurra, Falconer, Bald Blair and Green Hills.

WHY?

Participants at these workshops connected and built peer support, learnt new artistic skills, got creative, but most importantly chatted about some of the issues they face in their everyday life living in a rural and regional community.

BEING CREATIVE IS GOOD FOR YOUR WELLBEING!

On a scientific level, when you're painting, writing or similar, your brain goes into a state which scientists call 'flow'. Your brainwaves change, the feel-good hormone, dopamine, is released and the level of cortisol (stress hormone) in your body is reduced. This is similar to what happens when people meditate. This in turn has a positive effect on both your mental and physical health, lowering your heart rate, reducing feelings of stress and anxiety, and regulating your breathing.

ACTIVITY 1: POM POM WALL HANGINGS



**ADD SOME LUSH TEXTURE TO YOUR WALL WITH
A STATEMENT WALL HANGING**

Visit this website for more inspiration
www.sugarandcloth.com/diy-pom-pom-wall-hang



EXERCISE 1

Look at an object, or a group of objects, and instead of drawing them, try to draw the space between or around the objects. This makes you look at the world differently. It can allow you to create some very interesting shapes and potentially lead to a wonderful piece of art.



ACTIVITY 2 : SCREEN PRINTING



WHAT YOU NEED:

- Image of what you want to print
- Clear plastic a4 sheet
- Permanent marker to trace the image onto the plastic sheet. Colour in the pieces you are going to cut out
- Some sort of blade to cut out the coloured in shapes
- Fabric paint or acrylic paint mixed with textile medium (2 parts acrylic to 1 part medium)
- A piece of cardboard to put inside the shirt to stop the paint seeping through
- Masking tape to tape the plastic sheet onto fabric surface
- Paint roller to roll the paint over the stencil
- Sunny spot to let the paint dry

HOW ARE YOU GOING?



Well

Unwell

How are you feeling?	Self-aware & calm	Irritable or impatient	Angry	Aggressive out of control
What's your stress level?	Coping well	Worried nervous	Very nervous panicky	Highly anxious panic attacks
What's your outlook?	Positive outlook	Overwhelmed	Feeling hopeless	Depressed or suicidal thoughts
How are you working?	Working productively	Putting things off, forgetting	Poor performance	Unable to perform duties
How are you sleeping?	Sleeping normally	Trouble sleeping	Restless disturbed sleep	Sleeping too much or too little
What's your energy level?	Energetic	Low energy levels	Tired	Physical symptoms of illness
What's your activity level?	Keeping active	Decreasing activities	Little enjoyment from activities	Avoiding activities
How social are you?	Feeling connected	Withdrawing from social activity	Irritated & frustrated with others	Isolated from others

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



Keep it up!



Ask for support, try not to judge yourself



See your GP



You must get help



Centre for Rural & Remote Mental Health

crrmh.com.au



ramhp.com.au



Talk to friends and family

Do something you enjoy

Don't put it off, act now.

Contact Community Health or your EAP

Help is available

Mental Health Line 1800 011 511





EXERCISE 2

Write a list of 10 things that are free (or very cheap), which cheer you up. Then add a paragraph about each one explaining why it improves your mood. This makes you focus on the positive things that you can do to improve your mood. This also relates back to taking notice of what's around you. For example, if you enjoy watching a sunset, then head out to see one and take notice of the magnificent colours and surrounding beauty as the sun sets.

ACTIVITY 3 :

CALICO TOTE BAGS



EXERCISE 3

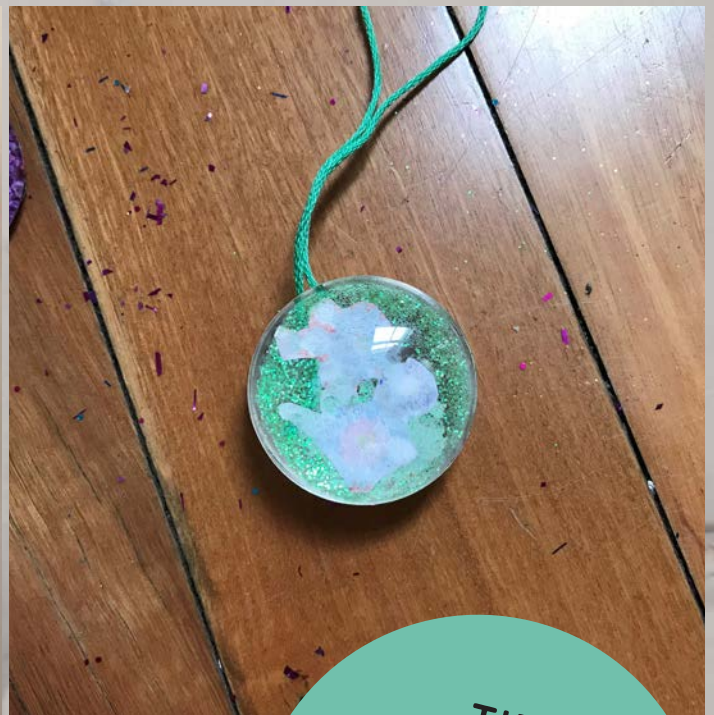
Chose an object or landscape and try to draw it upside down – the wrong way up. This frees your mind, completely taking away any expectation of what things ‘should’ look like – and allows you to experiment with art in a new way.

ACTIVITY 4 : EMBROIDERY

KEEP THE EMBROIDERY HOOP ON THE
WORK AS IT ACTS
AS A FRAME!



ACTIVITY 5 : MAGNETS & HANGING DECORATIONS



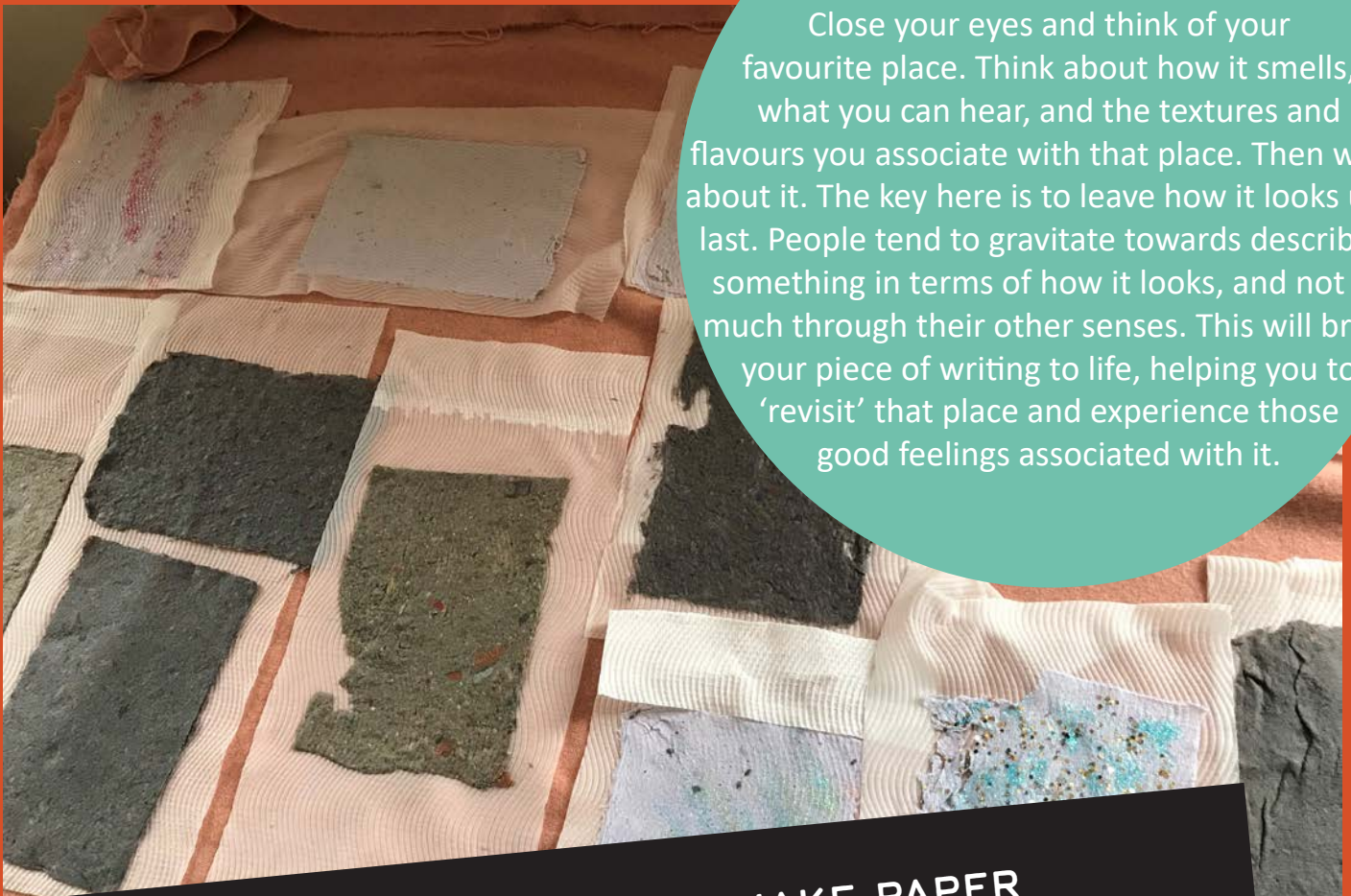
TIP
Use clear craft glue as we found the wood glue left behind a milky film!

ACTIVITY 6 : PAPER MAKING



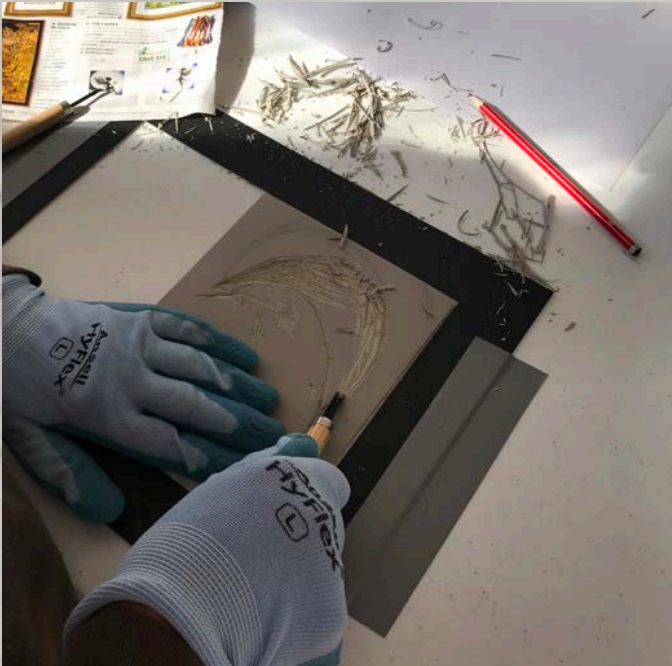
EXERCISE 4

Close your eyes and think of your favourite place. Think about how it smells, what you can hear, and the textures and flavours you associate with that place. Then write about it. The key here is to leave how it looks until last. People tend to gravitate towards describing something in terms of how it looks, and not so much through their other senses. This will bring your piece of writing to life, helping you to 'revisit' that place and experience those good feelings associated with it.



VISIT WWW.WIKIHOW.COM/MAKE-PAPER
FOR STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS ON MAKING PAPER

ACTIVITY 7: LINO CUTTING

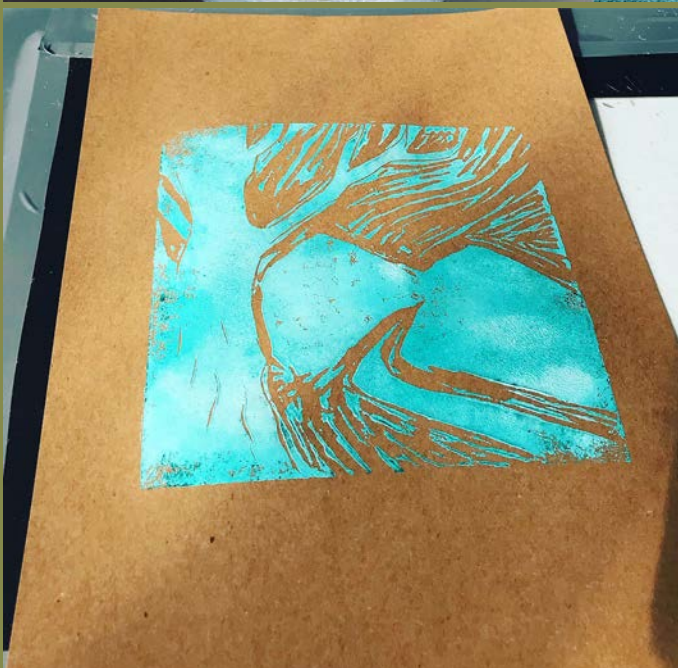


TIP

Heat up your lino tile with a hair dryer or in the sun to make it much easier to cut. Watch your fingers, wear gloves and always cut away from you!

**TEST YOUR CREATIVE SKILLS WITH
CHIN COLLE (LAYERING PRINTING WITH
COLOURED PAPER CUT-OUTS)**

Visit this website for a great example
www.handprinted.co.uk/ramblings/printing-with-chine-colle



ACTIVITY 8: IMOVIE WORKSHOP



WATCH & DOWNLOAD YOUR VIDEO HERE

WWW.ARTSNW.COM.AU/COMMUNITY-CREATIVITEA-CHAT-CONNECT-CREATE

let's talk

managing stress during drought



Rural communities are resilient and resourceful with people relying on being able to solve problems and overcome challenges. However in drought or dry conditions, there are often factors that are out of our control and that can cause significant stress. When we are busy or stressed, looking after our mental and physical health can often be forgotten but it is important to manage our health to ensure that we can make clear decisions and cope with other stressors in our life.

Signs that someone may be stressed:

- Anger or irritability
- Worry or nervousness
- Loss of concentration
- Loss of interest
- Low energy
- Relationship issues
- Unusual headaches and body aches
- Changes in sleeping and eating patterns
- Increased drug or alcohol use

When someone is under prolonged stress, they may have difficulty making decisions regarding their finances, stock or relationships. If someone is showing signs of being stressed, it is important to talk about it and take action as soon as possible.

Having a conversation:

When having a conversation, chat to the person in a comfortable place about what you have noticed and why you are concerned. You do not need to fix their problems but you need to listen to their concerns and reassure the person that there is help available.

Ways you can start the conversation:

"I haven't seen you around much lately, ...what's been happening?"

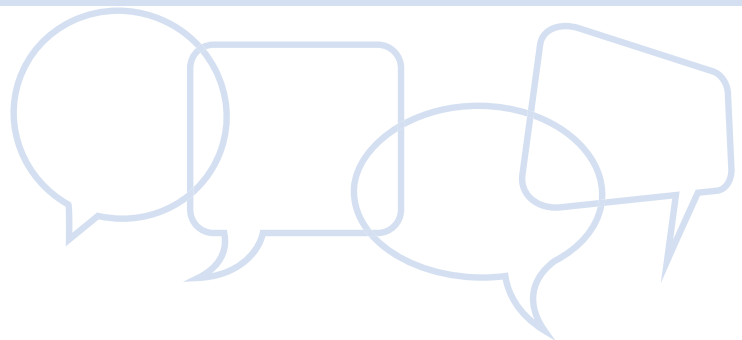
"You look a bit run down, how are you going?"

If the person is not coping, then encourage them to take action.

Looking after yourself:

In tough times we also need to remember to look after ourselves. Taking care of yourself is important, as it will increase your capacity to deal with stressors.

- Try to have some time out
- Do things you enjoy
- Keep in touch with family, friends and neighbours



- Don't self assess – seek advice from financial counsellors or other professionals to make more informed decisions
- Reflect on the good stuff
- Eat well, sleep well and only use alcohol in moderation

How to take action...

GP – Contact your local general practitioner (GP)

Health Direct – www.healthdirect.gov.au

Look up health services in your area.

NSW Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511

24/7 telephone line providing advice and referral.

Lifeline – 13 11 14

24/7 confidential telephone line for crisis support.

Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467

24/7 telephone line for anyone affected by suicide.

Alcohol Drug Information Service –
1800 250 015

24/7 confidential telephone line providing advice, referral and support.

National Association for Loss & Grief –
02 6882 9222 (During Business Hours)

Offers a free telephone counselling service to those experiencing loss or grief.

Salvation Army Rural Chaplains –
02 9466 3544

Provides regular visits to farmers and other rural workers and provides other assistance.

Rural Aid – 1300 327 624

Conducts free calls or personal visits from qualified and registered counsellors. This is a new service and is not operational in all areas of NSW.



Further drought support:

DPI Drought Hub – www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/climate-and-emergencies/drouthub

Provides information on services and supports available to prepare for and manage drought.

Rural Resilience Program – www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/about-us/rural-support/rural-resilience-program

Links farmers to services and initiatives to build personal and business resilience through Rural Resilience Officers and Rural Support Workers.

Local Land Service – 1300 795 299
www.lls.nsw.gov.au

Provides services and knowledge in regards to agricultural production, animal health, pest and disease management and environmental threats.

Rural Financial Counselling Service – 1800 686 175

Provides free information and assistance on financial position, budgets and submitting applications to primary producers, fishers and small rural businesses.

NSW Rural Assistance Authority – 1800 678 593
www.raa.nsw.gov.au

Provides assistance to rural producers and small businesses in regional NSW.



Find your local RAMHP Coordinator

VISIT www.ramhp.com.au



RAMHP has 14 Coordinators based across NSW who are able to provide specialist knowledge and support for people experiencing mental health concerns.



CONNECT WITH US:



E: ramhp@newcastle.edu.au

W: www.ramhp.com.au



Proudly funded by



Other Resources..

The Rural Adversity Mental Health Program (RAMHP) is a major project of the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health (CRRMH). RAMHP has 14 Coordinators based across regional, rural and remote NSW who inform, educate and connect individuals, communities and workplaces with appropriate services and programs. We link people to local mental health services and resources, we educate workplaces and communities about mental health and wellbeing and we respond in times of natural disasters and severe adversity.

Visit their website www.ramhp.com.au

View and download resources www.ramhp.com.au/downloadable-resources

Contact

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Kate.Arndell@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

0405 288 081

(Wed, Thurs, Fri)

Creative Activities

How Tapping Into Your Creativity Can Improve Your Wellbeing

by Dominique De-Light, Director and Co-Founder of Creative Future

www.bupa.co.uk/newsroom/ourviews/tapping-creativity-improve-wellbeing



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