



Supporting “Changing Lives” Summer 2021. Trauma dolls

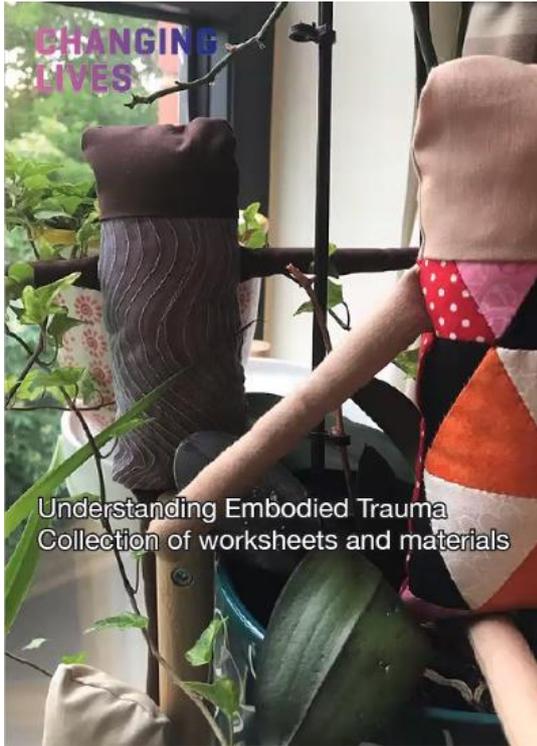
Changing Lives have been working with Dr Angelika Strohmayer from Northumbria University to develop an educational toolkit as part of their Trauma Training. This will be rolled out organisationally to support staff to better understand trauma and the impact on the brain and body for the people they support as well as society. They are hoping that Mothers Union members may be able to support them in their mission to “sew that doll” and create a number of training dolls to aid the staff in their development. The dolls will be part of a larger toolkit that will be used nationally to train the staff internally. There are patterns available to make the dolls, two of which are shown below. If you think some of your members would be able to make one of these very important teaching tools please just get in touch with me.

Changing Lives write; You can use the attached pattern to create the dolls. The exact shape and size is up to you, but they should roughly be 30cm tall (from foot to head). The arms, legs, and head should be skin coloured (including different shades of brown) - this material should not be patterned. The face should be blank and should not have any details. The head should be directly attached onto the body, without a neck or any details. Please use toy stuffing to stuff the dolls arms, legs, the head and the body.

The body is where you can be creative. You can experiment with layering different textiles on top of one another, using different colours and patterns, use materials with different textures, and experiment with hand embroidering onto or machine quilting the body of the doll.

The filling for each doll (eg. <https://www.lovecrafts.com/en-gb/p/trimits-toy-stuffing-250g> £3.50 - made roughly 7 dolls) with cost for one doll (roughly £1)

Linda Benneworth



Understanding Embodied Trauma Collection of worksheets and materials

Making the dolls Dolls: A recipe in four parts

It is important to remember that this is an educational tool, not a therapeutic tool, so please do not use this activity to think through your own or others' traumatic experiences. If you require more than one doll, you may also want to turn the making of the dolls into an activity with the rest of your team. Here, I present a 'recipe' to you of how you may wish to do this. A 'recipe' is a relatively common term in crafting circles, where you are able to adapt many parts of the 'pattern' to fit your own needs. Just like when cooking, the recipe is there as a guide rather than a set of definitive instructions. If you want your meal to be spicier, you can always add more chilli, or if you'd rather your cookies be vegan, you can switch out the butter for margarine and the egg for a mashed-up banana. Just like that, this recipe of how to make your own Trauma Dolls set is adaptable to your own needs.

The sketch of the pattern is located after the below instructions.

This might be a good activity to do during an away day, or to do as part of a reflexive team meeting where you are working on developing yourselves into even better trauma-informed practitioners.

Step 1: Making your doll

You can use the pattern pieces to plan out your doll – sketch out some of your ideas first and then collect fabrics that you may want to use. You may want to sketch out a few different ideas to help you think through different aspects related to trauma and our bodily responses to that. It might also be helpful to play around with some of your collected fabrics – what textures can you create when you overlay the fabrics, fold them, cut them up, or embellish them with some hand stitching? To help you think this through, go to later on in this booklet you can find the Global Sequelae of Trauma.

This can be a solitary activity, but it could also be done in discussion and collaboration with your colleagues or other experts by experience. If you are doing this activity with others, make sure you calculate in enough time for you to all discuss your ideas with one another – so you can build on each other's' ideas!

Step 2: Show off your dolls

This step will be a little harder to do if you are making these dolls by yourself. But there's no harm in showing your colleagues your work in progress, even if you are the only one working on the dolls. If others maybe don't really understand the reason for creating or using the dolls, this might be a nice opportunity to bring them up informally, and in a way that is non-threatening. You might just want to show off your handiwork to them and then ask them what they think of your work.

If you are working with others, you should now show your doll to your colleagues. Please also make sure you have a close look at the dolls created by your colleagues. Make sure you look and touch the fabrics that were used, feel the different textures, and think about what patterns were chosen to make the dolls.

After having a close look, present your doll to your colleagues and listen to your colleague present their doll to you. In this very informal presentation, you should talk about what you were thinking about while making the doll, why you chose certain materials, and what you think about the outcome of this crafting project. Feel free to ask each other questions about the dolls you have created – no matter how small or insignificant these questions might seem! These little questions can often lead to really interesting discussions.

Something you might want to discuss in a bit more detail is: What can you learn from each other