

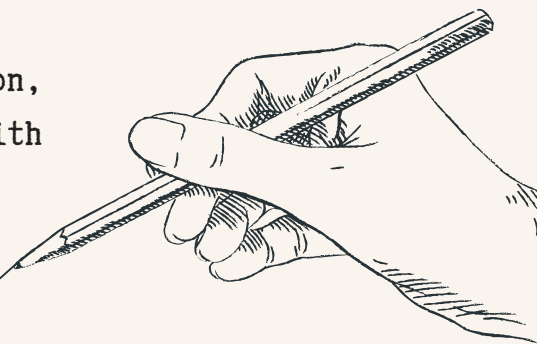
Creative

Common

Ground

A collection of artworks and stories celebrating connection, mindfulness and expression with people seeking asylum

2026



# Creative Common Ground

Creative Common Ground was a participatory arts project lead by artist Jade Sturrock and Refugee Sanctuary Scotland with people seeking asylum. Over six workshops, we explored the power of art and mindfulness as tools for relaxation, self-expression and connection. Together, we marbled, printed, collaged, wrote, drew and

explored the city - finding moments of clarity through making art.

What you hold in your hands is a collective creation. Each page carries the voice of someone who found solace in a workshop, inspiration in a new place, or comfort in the support of a new friend. The artworks, techniques and tips, quotes and photos are all small reminders of what it means to belong, create and share a journey together.

This book is yours to explore, try things at home or pass on to someone who might need a moment of calm or a spark of creativity. We hope it invites you to pause, breathe, and find your own creative common ground.



Jade Sturrock is a visual Participatory Artist based in Glasgow. You can get in touch via: [www.jadesturrock.com](http://www.jadesturrock.com) or by emailing [jadesturrockcreates@gmail.com](mailto:jadesturrockcreates@gmail.com)

# The Journey Begins...

## *hella & welcome*

Each workshop began with a little warm-up, sometimes a breathing exercise, a quick game, a demonstration, or just checking in with ourselves and each other. You'll find one of our warm-up activities on the next page, along with some of the techniques we explored together.

Please feel free to try any of the activities in the book in your own time. Try to be kind to yourself and remember there's no 'good' or 'bad'... if it feels right to you is absolutely right!

**"Art is like exercise. You wouldn't expect to become a bodybuilder overnight and the same goes with art. The most important thing is to enjoy the process"**



## *Ocean Wave Breathing*

Grab a blank piece of paper and a pen. As you breathe in, draw a line upwards. As you breathe out, draw a line downwards, without taking your pen off the paper. Notice how the pattern changes if you change the speed of your breath. Aim to fill the whole page with waves – they can overlap. If you like you can fill in the gaps with ink and a brush. You could also write words about how you feel.

- remember to breathe.

Take a moment for yourself!

Relax your shoulders.

Relax your feet

Feel your feet touching the ground.

Breathe in and count to 4.

1, 2, 3, 4.

Hold your breath for 4.

1, 2, 3, 4.

Breathe out for 4.

1, 2, 3, 4.

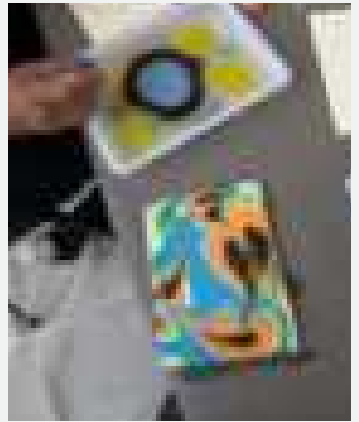
Repeat. You got this! ☺



"I feel lonely when I am just at home looking at the walls. When I come here I am with other people" -participant

# Marbling

Marbling is easy and great for relaxation. You can either use a marbling kit or shaving foam and acrylic inks and a tray or basin. You drop your ink into the water or foam and can swirl it around using a stick, comb, or fork to make different patterns. Then you dip the paper or card in and watch the artwork come to life! You can also marble onto fabric, materials like wood, or even make your own wrapping paper! The backgrounds of all the pages in this book are from our marbling workshop.





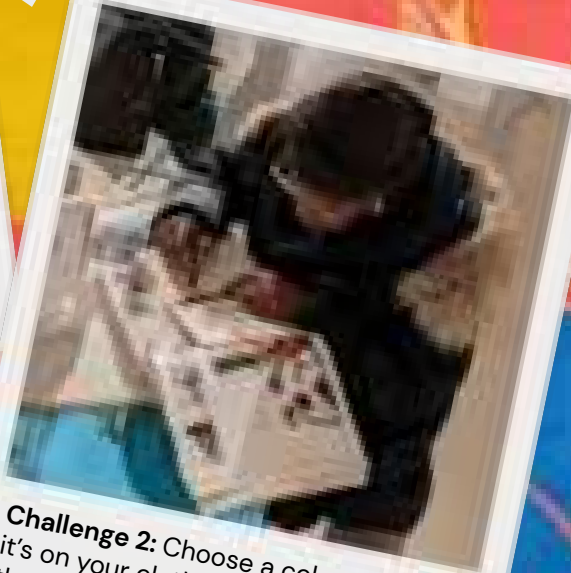
We also marbled the front covers of personal sketchbooks to use throughout the project

# Group visit to GOMA (gallery of modern art)

to get inspiration though  
drawing and setting  
ourselves some challenges!



**Challenge 1:** Find a pattern you see in an artwork or in the building. Try to copy it through sketching.



**Challenge 2:** Choose a colour - maybe it's on your clothes. Find some things in the gallery that match it. Draw them.



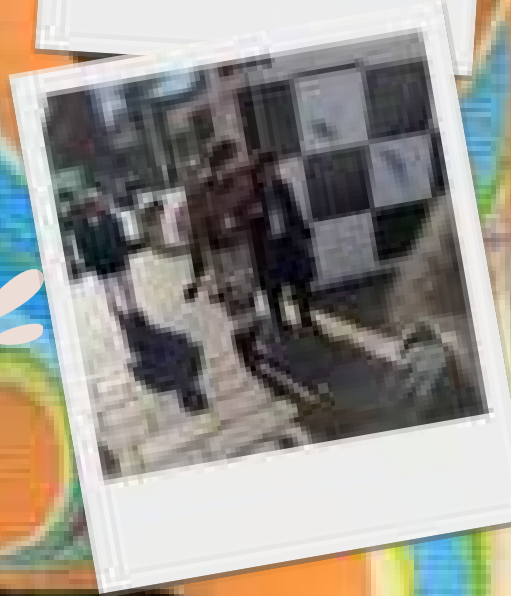
**Challenge 3:** Choose a sculpture or object. Draw it without looking down or taking your pen on the page.

# Noticing

Whether you're in a gallery, a park or somewhere else, pick four things:

- Something that looks calm
- Something that looks powerful
- Something that feels familiar
- Something that feels mysterious

You can either: write them down, take a photo on your phone or do a quick sketch or it. Or just observe and pay attention to what thoughts come up...



*"I managed to visit galleries and places in Glasgow that I did not know before"*  
-participant

# Welcome to Glasgow!



There is lots to explore in the city. We hope anyone new here settles in and we have written welcome notes for you.

Hi,  
Welcome to Glasgow! We hope you are settling in well. We have written these notes to help you get started. If you need any help, please contact your tutor or the Student Support team. We are here to help you with anything you need. If you have any questions, please contact your tutor or the Student Support team. We are here to help you with anything you need.

Support available:

Hi,  
Welcome to Glasgow! We hope you are settling in well. We have written these notes to help you get started. If you need any help, please contact your tutor or the Student Support team. We are here to help you with anything you need.

Support available:



Card

HARVEST ALLEGORY  
TO  
Glasgow

RE LABELLETER GO  
HNA LE DUKARD THE IN  
PROBATE LE NOLA  
♥ D AMPEIDALE ♥

We welcome you to Glasgow.

People here are very friendly and helpful.  
They are in many interesting places to visit - Glasgow Cathedral  
as well as St. Mungo museum.

The weather here is very cold and raining most of the time.

So I advise you to bring warm clothes especially in winter.

In Glasgow the rent is very cheap compared to England.

You can always find groups where you can socialize and meet

new friends. Glasgow is very beautiful and has green spaces

it rains most of the time. You will get used to the weather

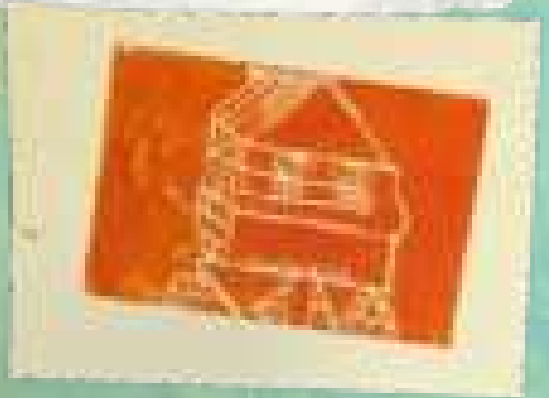
as time goes on, so don't worry too much, have fun and

enjoy your time and we'll be here when you need us.

Shirley Glasgow

# Lino Printing

We took our drawings from the GOMA visit and used them as designs for lino printing



"I could stay here for the next 3 months, I don't want to leave!"  
-participant



*"If you say 'I can't' then you won't do it. If you just try you'll see that you can"*

Designs  
represented  
personal symbols  
of joy / meaning  
- or something  
from the gallery  
that stood out



“Doing these things  
lets you use your  
brain”  
-participant

“I like sitting concentrating  
on this and I don't have to  
think about anything else”  
-participant

# mindful words walk



## kelvingrove park

Our walk took place on the Spring Equinox, and it was also Eid al-Fitr, and the sunniest day of the year so far! To celebrate, we shared a picnic and wrote together.



We walked through the park and wrote down sensory things we noticed (sounds, colours, textures, weather, sensations)

As we walk we slowly learn  
to notice the little things that  
keep us alive  
There is a special way to walk  
quietly in the world, people  
have not had  
but a person needed, only  
walking with yourself & trying to  
be yourself...



These collected words became the inspiration for written pieces like short poems or reflection

# Writing Exercise

After we collected our words on the walk,  
we sat to write, working with 3 prompts:

1. A journey
2. A change
3. I am part of nature, nature is part of me

## Journey

Life is a journey travelled by all kinds of species of nature. I walked on a beautiful sunny day. Couldn't feel anything but calmness and joy. Seasons changing. Trees starting to show life. People coming out to feel the nice warm breeze and enjoy a bit of natural vitamin D. Animals showing happiness too. Birds chirping and flying about. It's nice to see people outside without heavy clothing on as that life has passed and the journey still continues...



## I am part of nature - by Missy K

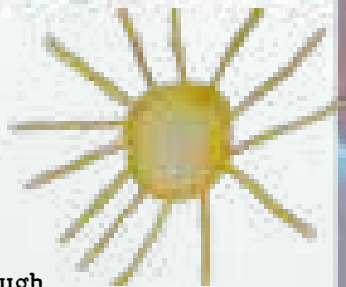
I am a woman, a nature created by God  
Yes I am nature because I am part of nature  
I take care of other nature  
I am a nature, I am part of nature

I water the plants  
I take care of animals and the environment  
I am nature, I am part of nature

I am grateful because i know how to react to other things  
happening around environments.  
I use my hands to improve things such as plant trees.  
I am nature, I am part of nature



I see people walk some dog.  
The birds can be heard.  
The scent of nature brings peace.  
People enjoying beautiful sunny day.  
See the flowers falling from the trees.  
Watching the ducks, they bath make me laugh.  
Although I've been this park before I always enjoy  
it the same way. Seeing people relax, other play,  
other read, and still others socialize with  
friends makes me feel good. It's wonderful to see  
how people can be happy just by going for a walk  
in the park on a sunny day.



-Ingrid

### Change

I noticed a change as I visited Kelvingrove park on a Friday with my colleagues. I noticed it was time for dormant. Many trees didn't have leaves, only a few were shining with green leaves. There was sunshine and we met so many people sitting on benches enjoying the sunshine because it was equinox period, the first day of spring. Everybody in the park enjoyed the weather, it was calm, warm & sunny.

-Edineth

### I am part of nature

Slow day today.  
I am ill but I am blossom  
I hope.  
Shadows of the wood pigeon ring  
slow, around.  
Come on sky! He shouts.  
But not aggressively. So a smile  
spreads from my mouth to my  
fingertips as I grow.

Deeper still

-Phoebe

### How things can change...

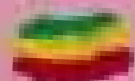


Things can change in the blink of an eye  
The turn of the sun, it's rays dance on my skin.

Gentle footsteps, always looking forward.  
We walk slowly and towards the sun.

Like a morning stretch or a leaf unfurling, we drift into  
gratitude.  
The environment changes into a warm embrace.

We are together and we are renewed.  
-Jade

7 3 7 1:25  
FO PA:  
7447



LIMITED

WELCOME  
TO  
GLASGOW

SMALL

HAPPY

WIFE



Somali:

Manta waa malin wanaagsan  
wana Eid  
Eidu waxay ku soo hagaagtay  
malin jimca ah bishuna waa  
2I/3/26.  
Saka waxan kacay 5:00.  
wakan aday masjidka  
wan soo labtay kadib  
waxon sameystay quraac  
Ka bacdi magalada ayaan  
imid kal iyo lab ay  
niisalamaya

Waxan maqla shibir codkoy  
iyo dooga urkisa.  
Waxan nahay 6 iyo I wiil.  
Waxan arka bisin.  
Mesha waa meel aad u qad  
uu guuri fican waxana ka  
heley xayawano yo  
shibirakal.  
Dad badan ayaa dhet maray  
dad badana woy ku dhet  
ciyarayan beertan waa  
beer aad iyo aad u fican.

by Hassan

English Translation:

Today is a good day,  
it is Eid.  
Eid has arrived on a Friday,  
and the date is 2I/3/26.  
This morning I woke up at 5:00.  
I went to the mosque,  
then returned home and prepared  
breakfast.  
After that, I went into town and  
exchanged greetings with one or  
two people.

I hear the sound of birds  
and the smell of the grass.  
There are six of us and one boy.  
I see ripe crops.  
This place is a very beautiful  
place.  
It has good surroundings and  
I saw animals and birds there.  
Many people passed by,  
and many people were there  
playing. This garden is  
a very, very beautiful garden.

# COLLAGE

After doing the guided visualisation exercise for mindfulness, everyone was asked to think about what images up from them. We used these ideas to make collages. Why not try it too?



To make the collages we used old newspapers, bit of artworks we didn't want to keep, magazines and scrapbook materials. We either ripped or cut the paper

# My Calm Place

Let's take a moment just for you.

Start by sitting comfortably... and gently closing your eyes if you feel okay doing that.

Take a deep breath in...

And let it out slowly.

Let's do that two more times.

Breathe in through your nose... and out through your mouth.

One more time... in... and out.

Now I'd like you to imagine a place that feels peaceful and calm.

Somewhere just for you.

This is your calm space.

Let it form gently in your mind, like a picture.

What does this place look like?

Is it inside or outside?

Is there grass beneath you? Or sand? A cosy blanket?

Can you feel the ground under your feet or your hands?

What colours can you see around you?

Are they soft and gentle, or bright and glowing?

What sounds can you hear here?

Maybe birdsong, the wind, water, or total quiet.

Are there any smells in this place?

Flowers? Trees? Maybe fresh air or something warm and homely?

Take a few more deep breaths here.

This is your calm space – it's in your mind always and you can return to it any time you like.

Now, ask yourself – are you here alone, or is someone with you?

There's no right answer. Just notice who is there.

Does it feel warm and sunny? Or cool and cosy? Is it raining?

Is there anything you're doing in this place?

Or are you just resting, watching, breathing?

Take a moment to enjoy it.

Let your body feel safe and soft.

And now, gently, bring your attention back to the room.

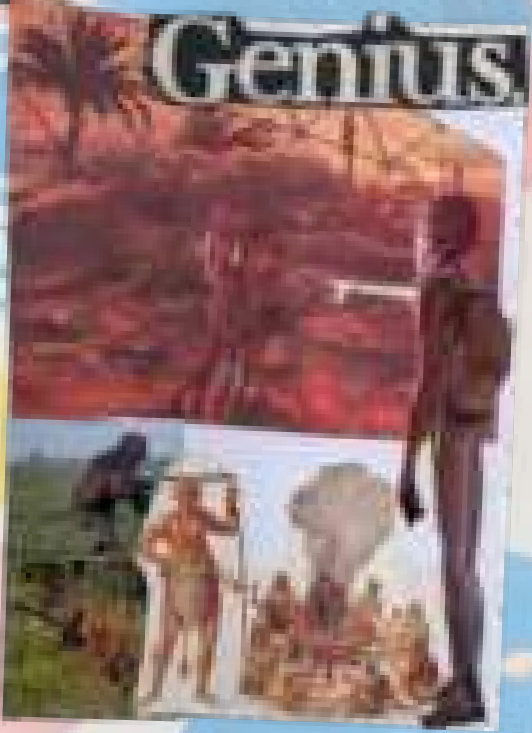
Wiggle your fingers or toes.

Take one last deep breath...

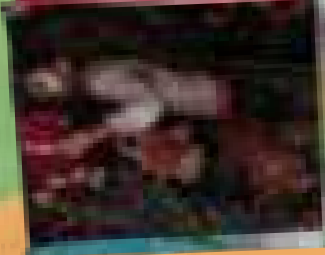
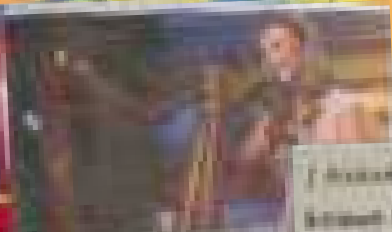
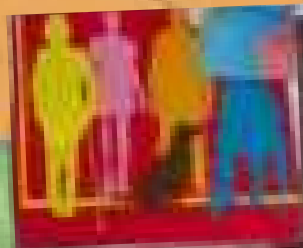
And when you're ready, slowly open your eyes.



The family went for shopping at the  
Genius Center and in the market, prepared  
everything and spent cooking and  
shopping and eating.



The family went for shopping at the  
Genius Center and in the market, prepared  
everything and spent cooking and  
shopping and eating.



I missed the image of a lady shopping because I like shopping very much and like with people when they are not engaged in work. I also liked seeing the group because that is the greatest satisfaction.

I also missed an image of a family being together (shopping and a day celebrating them).

I didn't see an image of a man standing in a formal and formal setting (formal attire) and seeing other people.

Another image is about a woman just lying down relaxing and playing with a baby.

*Leah M...*

Final

The image shows a man in a suit looking at a computer screen in a modern office setting. The man is looking at the screen with a focused expression.

Image of the world and the man who looks like the future with a bright future.

The challenge of his work is to make the world a better place.

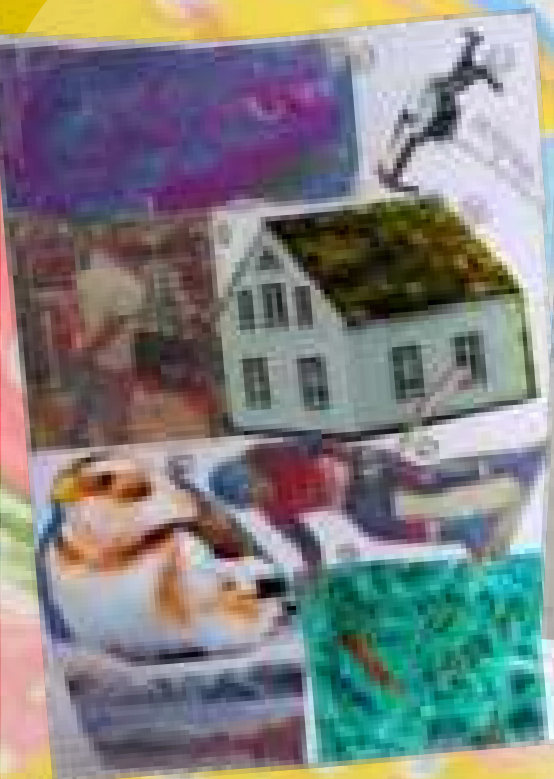
The importance of working hard.



...  
...  
...  
...

Just like the seasons, we as humans change constantly. We change everyday, our cells renew, our mind changes, our environment changes too. One day will not be that same as the next, nor will a phase or chapter of life. We ebb and flow. As living beings, as mammals, we are also part of nature, where nothing is permanent. In this way, we and nature are connected. All humans are the same in this way.

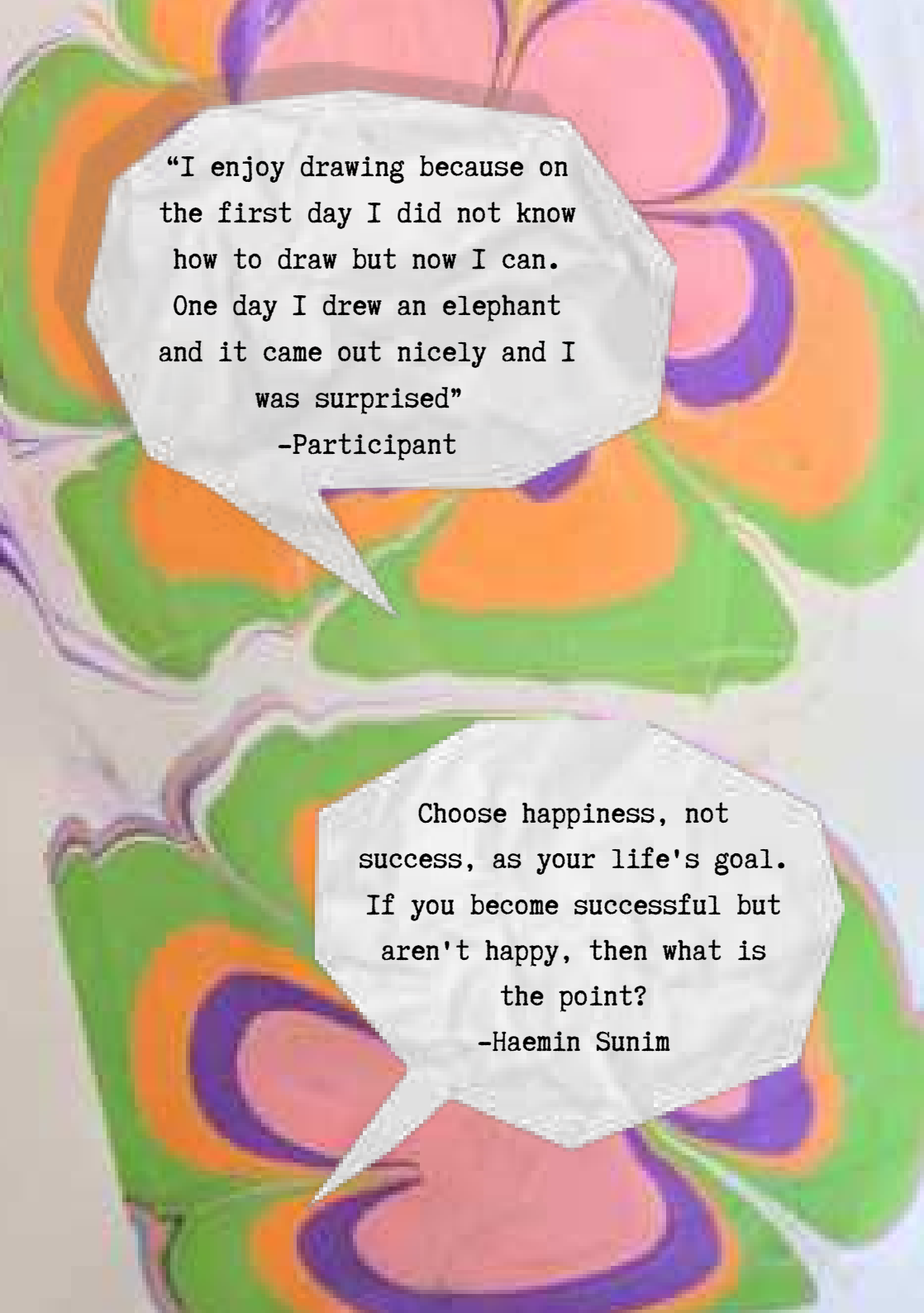
-Jade



Great photos...  
 I hope you...  
 I hope you...  
 I hope you...  
 I hope you...  
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 I hope you...  
 I hope you...

I hope you...  
 I hope you...  
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 I hope you...





“I enjoy drawing because on  
the first day I did not know  
how to draw but now I can.  
One day I drew an elephant  
and it came out nicely and I  
was surprised”

-Participant

Choose happiness, not  
success, as your life's goal.  
If you become successful but  
aren't happy, then what is  
the point?

-Haemin Sunim







“I enjoy go together see different  
people and went to galleries - pictures  
and many things”  
-participant

## Acknowledgements

We hope you enjoyed a glimpse of our creative journey. This book was born from the voices and imaginations of the participants, without whom this project would not have been possible. Thank you for sharing your time, encouragement, and creativity so generously with me and with each other.

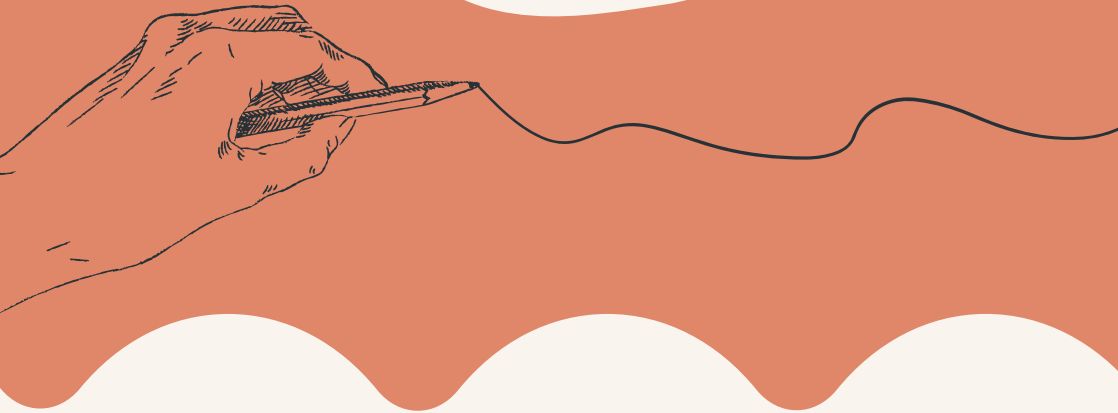
The project also would not have been possible without the support of Refugee Sanctuary Scotland including CEO Ronnie Tagwireyi, the staff, funders and donors who see the value in activities that support the wellbeing of those in the asylum system and refugees. I would also like to thank the volunteers who supported the delivery of the workshops, artists Phoebe Veitch and Theresa Thomson Malaney, for their help and kindness. I hope this project can show what is possible when it comes to participatory arts, and may we continue finding creative common ground with one another.

“Imagination and creativity are vital human capacities. They allow us to discover feelings and ideas in ourselves of which we were unaware. They allow us to reach beyond ourselves, to think and feel how things are for others. They allow us to escape our assumptions about how things are to discover how things could be. And they allow us to do that individually or together, to find our unique sensibility and to find what we share with others.”


—Francois Matarasso






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GROUND**



**Jade Sturrock Creates**

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