



Type of Presentation	Poster presentation
Presenter's details	Fiona Tuomey, MSc (Loss & Bereavement), HUGG Founder & CEO, Ireland. E: fiona@HUGG.ie
Abstract relates to	Level 2 Bereavement Support; providing services in a volunteer/community space.
Type of Focus	Practice: a promising suicide bereavement postvention activity
Target audience	Researchers, educators, funders and level 2 service providers
Title	Harnessing Meaningful Memories After Suicide; a memorial quilt needle felting workshop to facilitate connection, emotional expression, regulation, and compassionate conversations.
Background	Memorial quilting provides a structured, communal method of validating suicide loss, fostering shared meaning-making, and strengthening peer support among participants as they honour their deceased loved ones (Gutin, 2018). Needlecraft activities, including dry needle felting, facilitate emotional expression and have demonstrated benefits for mental health and wellbeing (Le Lagadec et al., 2024).
Rationale	The repetitive, rhythmic motions involved helps anchor participants in the present moment, supporting emotional regulation and reducing psychological distress. Individuals bereaved by suicide often experience shock, trauma, and profound emotional distress due to the sudden and sometimes violent nature of the loss. Creative arts-based approaches offer indirect, symbolic ways of processing suicide grief and creating emotional distance from acute pain (McGuinness, 2016).
Design	Three creative workshops were delivered to produce a memorial quilt comprising 78 individually crafted felt squares, each representing a loved one who died by suicide. Sessions were facilitated by one artist, one professional facilitator, and two trained peer-support volunteers with lived experience of suicide loss to ensure a safe, compassionate environment.
Results	Participants described the process as inspiring, calming, comforting, peaceful, relaxing, connecting, and hopeful. The completed quilt stands as a powerful collective artwork signalling solidarity, shared experience, and a reminder that those affected by suicide loss are not alone.
Conclusion	This low-cost postvention activity is easily replicable in community settings. Further research is needed to evaluate its therapeutic benefits for individuals bereaved by suicide.
List at least three references.	McGuinness, B. (2016) Gutin, N.J. (2018) Le Lagadec, D., Kornhaber, R., Johnston Devin, C., & Cleary, M. (2024)

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