

Craft a Meditation Box

[Darien Library](#)

Children

|

Adults

|

Intergenerational

Craft a Meditation Box

Feb 15, 2017

\$51-100

\$

Byline

Mallory Arents, Head of Adult Programming, Darien (Conn.) Library

Feeling frazzled after the holidays? We invited patrons to transform plain white boxes into unique creations through collage, all while learning about art therapy and mindfulness in a relaxing environment. Attendees walked away with completed boxes that illustrated their feelings and matched their personal style. All supplies were provided.

Advanced Planning

We partnered with [Silver Hill Hospital](#), a local nonprofit focusing on mental health and addiction. We wanted to host a simple craft program and offer a chance to talk about art therapy and mindfulness. We chose early January as people often feel frantic coming off the holiday season.

Marketing

Early on, we decided we wanted to host two back-to-back programs on January 14. The first, which took place from noon to 1 p.m., was geared toward adults and teenagers. The event was included in an e-blast focusing on "New Year, New You." We also submitted press releases to our local papers and included it in a newsletter for local events for seniors.

Our second event was geared toward young professionals in the area. We market these events strictly through [Meetup.com](#) as part of our [Adult Day Camp](#) series.

Budgeting

We spent \$75 on [plain white craft boxes](#). We used discarded magazines, glue sticks and scissors that we already had in house. Silver Hill Hospital provided Silly Putty, a stress ball and USB drives loaded with guided meditations for participants to begin filling their boxes with.

Day-of-event Activity

Before the event, we set up our conference room in one long table, boardroom style, so participants would have a chance to talk with one another while crafting. Each seat was given a box, scissors, glue stick and a stack of magazines to share. We also set up background music to play throughout the event.

Program Execution

Silver Hill's art therapist kicked off the event by talking about art therapy and explaining the activity. She instructed participants and said they could decorate their boxes however they liked, but that their boxes should evoke feelings of calmness and relaxation. She went on to say that many choose to decorate the outside of their boxes as they present themselves to the world and decorate the inside with images depicting their hopes, inner feelings and dreams. There was no right or wrong way, but what they were creating was a sanctuary for themselves.

With this five-minute intro, participants began thumbing through magazines and pasting pictures on their box. Some focused on serene shades of blue, others added motivational sayings and text, and one participant focused on images from around the world of places he wanted to visit. Each attendee left with a unique box that hopefully speaks just to them.

The hope is that participants went home after the event, filled their boxes with items that help them relax, and will go to them when they're feeling stressed or overwhelmed.

Between the two events, we had close to 50 attendees. We were thrilled to partner with Silver Hill Hospital, a leading provider in mental health services for our community. Participants were delighted to collage, an activity many of us haven't done since childhood, and there were already talks about what items they were going to fill their boxes with.

Advice

I'm so happy we hosted two programs for two different audiences. Both groups interacted with their boxes completely differently, and it was so fun to see! This event would work as a focused program for teens, families, seniors or anyone in between.

When saving discarded magazines, make sure to save a variety. Some participants had very specific ideas of what is relaxing to them. While some wanted water and beach scenes, others wanted images of babies. One person even used a giant

picture of Justin Bieber! It was helpful to have gossip magazines alongside nature, men's health, etc.

[Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.](#)

Supporting Materials

[Download this Program as a PDF](#)

- [Programming Librarian Facebook Group](#)

Slideshow Images



Image



More Programs

Nov 10, 2011

Children (9 and under)+ |

[Image](#)



Incubate Art at Your Library

Audiences:

Audience

Children (9 and under)

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Adults (21 and up)

Intergenerational

Oct 27, 2015

Young Adult (17 - 20)+ | \$

[Image](#)



Art on the Brain

Audiences:

Audience

Young Adult (17 - 20)

Jul 23, 2015

Adults (21 and up)+ | \$\$

[Image](#)



Paint Night

Audiences:

Adults (21 and up)