

I'll start with a quote from Grayson Perry, who is a champion of everyday creativity. The lockdown 'Grayson's Art Club' had the aim to 'unleash the creativity in us all':

*'Art helps us access and express parts of ourselves that are often unavailable to other forms of human interaction. It flies below the radar, delivering nourishment for our soul and returning with stories from the unconscious. A world without art is an inhuman world. Making and consuming art lifts our spirits and keeps us sane. Art, like science and religion, helps us make meaning from our lives, and to make meaning is to make us feel better.'*

We are no doubt preaching to the converted here, as we tend to be at conferences, but Lord Bassam opened the morning with a questions which we must all have asked ourselves at times: 'Am I creative? Can we all be creative?' And how does adding 'everyday' change the way we receive the word 'creativity'.

Helen followed Lord Bassam and demonstrated a very accomplished creative skill in performing poetry. Her performance threw up so many questions for me about research and evidence, and how we communicate information. Even more than that how we receive information and what we then do with that information. I received her poetic 'data' as feelings not thoughts. Receiving feelings is more physically embodied than receiving thoughts. It merged the political and personal – the poetic form giving us access to interaction and communication which may not be available in other forms. We experience the ambiguity of the data. The poetic form wrapped itself around the raw feelings contained within the data and allowed us to receive those feelings in a way that was manageable for us emotionally. Stories allow us to hold complexity and not expect simple answers. We didn't expect Helen, the 'expert' to give us the answers.

This came up in the second sessions this afternoon. Science and art can both be beset by a requirement for answers or an end product. The word 'creativity' puts emphasis on the process and experimentation rather than product or result. I heard 'everyday science' and 'everyday literacy'. Does the word 'everyday' help us to own it – all of us? Lord Bassam said that the everyday is 'the ordinary, the obscure'. It is perhaps that which we don't value. Vanessa Marr's work confronts this head on with Thing Power – the power of the everyday thing – in this case the usually invisible, humble duster but made beautiful through 'stitch drawings' made by everyday creative women - friends, family, communities, who transform them through the power of discovering a deeper understanding of their relationship to everyday domestic tasks – and there is a political and radical edge to that. The same session began with three creatives bringing together comics, songs and poems in a method called 'collaborative auto-ethnography' which I hadn't heard of but have heard several times today, a dynamic and energised method for challenging the status quo – in this case around decolonising the medical curriculum. I found it really exciting.

There is an energy in this work – a kind of wildness. I imagine we all felt that when Tom got us making lots of noise this morning, which gave me a physical sense of release and joyful play.

I haven't heard anyone talking about the mechanisms which might be activated when we are being creative and how they impact on our health and wellbeing - although Nick and Norma have just mentioned this in their summing up – flow and mood change for instance. Darrell Gale, Director of Public Health for East Sussex Council talked about 'having a good life' and inequality in access to culture in the context of health inequalities. He suggested that everyday creativity has the potential to reduce the gap in inequality of access and of health, but that we need to consider cultural appropriateness. In one of the sessions I was in this was turned around to ask the question what creativity is already happening in diverse communities which leads to an asset based approach. So what is the role of the professional in research, policy or practice with regard to everyday creativity – perhaps our role is primarily to reveal what everyday creativity is and create the space for people to explore their own creativity.

Sonia said that scientists are creating things that don't exist to make the world a better place. Afrodita talked about how poetry is about making something from nothing. 'We have nothing, we will give it to each other.'