

Abstract Title:-

Art as a Language for Emotional Wellbeing: Using Expressive Art in Professional Practice

Keynote Speaker – Ms. Zainab Abbas – Expressive Art Practitioner for Emotional Wellbeing | Founder, A Million Little Pieces



Abstract:

Expressive art offers a powerful, inclusive approach to emotional wellbeing by creating a safe space for self-expression, reflection, and regulation—without requiring artistic skill or prior experience. This session explores how intuitive and process-led art practices can support emotional insight, resilience, and connection across diverse populations, including children, adolescents, adults, and People of Determination.

Rooted in expressive art methodologies and human-centered practice, the session introduces participants to practical ways of using art as a “visual language”—helping individuals externalize emotions, reduce overwhelm, and build self-awareness through creative process. Rather than focusing on the quality of the artwork, the emphasis is placed on meaning-making, emotional safety, and exploration.

Through experiential examples and guided discussion, attendees will gain insight into how expressive art can be integrated into professional practice in educational, therapeutic, community, and workplace settings. The session highlights ethical considerations, inclusive facilitation strategies, and adaptable frameworks that support dignity, personal pace, and emotional choice.

Participants will leave with accessible tools and session structures that can be applied immediately to support wellbeing, communication, and emotional regulation through creative expression.

Keywords

Expressive Art, Emotional Wellbeing, Self-Regulation, Intuitive Art, Inclusion

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Explain how expressive and intuitive art practices can support emotional wellbeing through self-expression and regulation.

- Identify key principles of process-led expressive art (safety, choice, meaning-making, and non-judgment).
- Apply simple expressive art activities suitable for professional settings (education, therapy, wellbeing programs, and community support).
- Recognize inclusive facilitation strategies for working respectfully with diverse individuals, including People of Determination.

Short Professional Biography:

Zainab Abbas is an expressive art practitioner for emotional wellbeing and the founder of A Million Little Pieces, an initiative centered on intuitive, process-led art as a tool for self-expression, emotional regulation, and reflection. Her work sits at the intersection of lived experience, education, and long-standing creative practice, positioning art as an accessible language for emotional wellbeing.

With a formal background in Visual Communication and more than 20 years of experience in design and creative direction, Zainab brings strong expertise in visual language, storytelling, and creative process into her wellbeing practice. Over time, her journey has evolved from outcome-driven creative work into a reflective, human-centered approach focused on expression, meaning-making, and emotional insight.

She holds advanced training in expressive and creative methodologies and has developed an integrative framework that blends design thinking, intuitive art-making, and expressive art practices. Zainab works inclusively with children, adolescents, adults, and People of Determination, with a strong emphasis on dignity, inclusion, ethical practice, and meeting individuals at their own pace.

Her work has been delivered across educational, corporate, and community settings locally and internationally. Through A Million Little Pieces, she continues to explore how expressive art can support awareness, connection, and wellbeing—without requiring artistic skill or prior experience.