

Vignette 1 - The Drawing Lab

The Drawing Lab¹ (Sergeant & Verreyt, 2016; Peels & Sergeant, 2018) welcomes a diverse group of people into a safe space where they feel capable of participating and contributing. People are invited to draw about what they find important in life. The Drawing Lab is based on the method of *graphic elicitation*. Each participant uses personal drawing language and may (optionally) explain the drawing orally afterwards. We discovered that the creation of space for non-verbal meetings, where people feel safe to share from their own experience—a way to interview people without asking questions—was as important as the method. In this way we retrieved stories from those people thought unable to share their experiences. The planning of the Drawing Lab requires time and consistent organisation. It is very important to pay attention to every anchor in an organized way. Introducing creative methods asks for thorough reflection, and design of a well-prepared environment:

- Before starting the Drawing Lab, we make all team members recognizable through the Drawing Lab apron. This step can be skipped in small groups.
- The Drawing Lab team is given an oral and written introduction to the concept of 'Quality of Life' and the eight domains of wellbeing (Schalock et al, 2002). Team members learn to describe Quality of Life domains in a clear way to guests and get an introduction to handling the various steps in the Drawing Lab method. We practice the 'after-draw-interviews.' The Quality of Life framework is used as it is known worldwide and covers a broad field of important life themes.
- We explain the concept of 'silent support' to the team members (see *Figure 7*): giving support to participants in a way that ensures they don't feel 'as if they need support,' as in this way they don't feel embarrassed.
- In the Lab, at least one artist is present who can help guests shape their ideas.
- In the room there is a table with information on Quality of Life and its eight domains in words, easy language, mind maps and images.
- Drawing pencils, crayons, fine black markers, eraser, pencil sharpeners, and white paper in small and large formats are displayed. The materials look professional to make sure people don't feel treated in a childish way.
- The drawing tables are set up criss-cross with comfortable chairs.

To obtain a safe space (see *Figure 8*), appropriate ways of communicating must be found. In the Drawing Lab, we use spoken and written words in easy language. We also use photos and figures to explain the Drawing Lab assignment.

¹ In previous research, we created the Drawing Lab based on the experience of organizing eight drawing labs in five different settings (Drawing Festival 'The Big Draw,' Music Festival 'Rock for Specials,' Disability Studies Congress, Congress for experts by experience, Congress on the UNCRPD). This new approach was designed to organize graphic elicitation in order to facilitate and support dialogue on Quality of Life themes. It was tested over four years with 551 participants, including at least 198 people with intellectual disabilities.