

Capacitar practice with Grow (for those with mental health challenges)

I had an opportunity to co-facilitate a two-hour programme with Grow which was holding its regional conference in Killarney. The theme was 'Renew our Will to Change'.

For a lot of people at the conference, it was their first experience of Capacitar, so we began with presenting Capacitar and how it fitted into their theme. We began with the Tai Chi basic movements. We then did some breath work, demonstrating abdominal breathing and getting the group to experience the difference between deep breath and shallow breath.

We then introduced the finger holds highlighting the meridians of energy in the body and how they become obstructed due to an emotional response. Through a visualisation meditation, each participant was guided to hold each finger and focus on the emotion appropriate to that finger. Then with the emotion acknowledged, using the breath release the emotion. We then took some feedback on the experience in small groups and then in a big group.

We then gave some information and handouts on relaxation techniques and acupuncture points to relieve depression and low energy. In keeping with the theme of 'Renew Our Will To Change' the anti-depression acupuncture points identified encouraged the release of energy which had been blocked. As the body opens up, the feelings can surface and be released.

A lively discussion then ensued about the practices, with lots of questions and information shared. The group found the practices very helpful and engaged fully in the session.