



Working for Health

Art and health

Presenter

Francois Matarasso is a researcher who has looked closely at the field of arts and health.

Francois

There's a whole raft of different benefits that, people personally can derive from being involved in in arts activity, which range from increased self confidence, new skills better social networks, a better sense of well being, a whole range of things of that kind. Then some of those individual benefits then also translate into wider social benefits into communal benefits because, either the individuals themselves or as groups start doing work which has wider community repercussions. So, questions of for instance community empowerment, the idea of people's view of their local environment, things of that kind. In order to evaluate something, you have to know what it was intended to achieve, and that the people who are involved in that project are the people who are best placed to tell you what it was intended to achieve, or to decide for themselves what they intend for it to achieve, and equally they are the best placed people to decide when, what they hoped would happen has happened or has not happened, the extent to which it has happened, then I think you can't escape from the need to set indicators for every project that you do. Artists who want to get involved in evaluating their work, should first of all set themselves proper standards to, to aspire to rather than unrealistic ones. The fact that the people who are involved in a project are involved in its evaluation, does not invalidate their evaluation. The issues that matter are about how that evaluation is done, how clear and rigorous it is, how, whether it's done with integrity or not, whether as an independent person reading the evaluation report you can follow the reasoning that underpins that evaluation and you can judge whether or not it's credible. I don't think there is anything inherently more credible in an external evaluator, than an internal evaluator.