

# Illuminated Collage

## Home Activity Guide

The illuminated collage activity uses collaborative art making as a vehicle to share feelings in a creative way. A collage is a type of art that is made up of lots of different pieces. You'll be making this collage together, each person contributing their own unique pieces to the whole.

This activity is the result of an 8-month partnership between multimedia artist Elisa H. Hamilton ([www.ElisaHHamilton.com](http://www.ElisaHHamilton.com)) and The Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds at Massachusetts General Hospital ([www.mghclaycenter.org](http://www.mghclaycenter.org)). The Clay Center is a practical, online-only educational resource dedicated to promoting and supporting the mental, emotional, and behavioral well-being of children, teens, and young adults.



By sharing our feelings together through art, we create an entrypoint for conversations about mental health, and we bring dialogue about mental health out of the shadows and into the light!

This activity should not be considered as medical, health care, or behavioral health care advice. Nothing contained in this activity is intended to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment or as a substitute for consultation with a qualified healthcare professional. If you have concerns about your health, please contact your healthcare provider.

To learn more about the project visit <https://illuminatingmentalhealth.weebly.com>



# Preparing for the Activity

## Space Needs

You will need a window that is easily accessible and a comfortable workspace near the window.

**Time** 30 minutes

**Participants** 2 or more, Ages 5+

## Materials Needs

- Vellum paper in assorted colors
- "Wall-Safe" Scotch Tape
- Markers and/or Pens
- Scissors

**Optional** Stencils, Rulers, a piece of cardboard as a drawing surface if you're working on the floor.

You can find all of these materials at your local art supply store, or online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Note that some markers will smudge when used on vellum paper; test your markers in advance to ensure best results.



# Instructions

## Step 1 - Choose a window for your collage.

In selecting your window, consider these things:

- Which windows in your home get the most light and at what times of day?
- Do you want your collage to be in a place that you see it all the time?
- Do you want your collage somewhere people outside can see it?

## Step 2 - Get to know your art-making materials.

Touch and hold the vellum paper. Feel the smoothness of the vellum and the way it can flex and fold; it's a flat piece of paper, but can become three-dimensional depending on how you use it. When you hold the vellum up to the light, it appears to glow - isn't that beautiful?

## Step 3 - Think about the feelings that you have experienced recently.

As you're feeling the vellum, consider the feelings you've had over the course of the day or week. Can you identify a specific feeling that you had or are having? What made you feel that way? How did you feel when you woke up this morning? How are you feeling right now?

## Step 4 - Express your feelings by creating a collage!

As you think about the feelings that you have experienced recently, use the art materials to express your feelings by creating a collage directly on the window. Write on the vellum paper in words and drawings. Cut and fold the vellum paper in to shapes. Overlap colors of paper. Tape your creations to the window as you go, and use as many pieces of paper as you want to express yourself. Connect the pieces you make to other pieces on the glass, and grow your collage together.

## Step 5 - Admire your creation, and talk about the process.

When everyone feels like the collage is done, step back to behold your beautiful creation. Take a few minutes to talk about how it felt to share your feelings this way, and ask everyone to share something that they notice about one or two of the collage pieces. Take some pictures of your favorite parts of the collage to remember your creation. Consider leaving your collage up for a few days to reflect on again later. You can also make your collage over the course of a week, adding a few pieces each day, and reflecting on how your feelings change over time.

# Feelings List

Here's a list of some feelings you may have had before.  
Some of these words you may have heard, and some of these words may be new to you.  
Use this list to help you think through your own feelings.

|              |           |            |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| alert        | excited   | pleased    |
| amused       | frazzled  | proud      |
| angry        | friendly  | puzzled    |
| annoyed      | generous  | relieved   |
| ashamed      | grumpy    | restless   |
| bashful      | guilty    | sad        |
| bored        | happy     | scared     |
| brave        | helpful   | shy        |
| calm         | hopeful   | silly      |
| carefree     | hurt      | sorry      |
| confident    | inspired  | stressed   |
| confused     | irritated | supported  |
| creative     | jealous   | surprised  |
| curious      | joyful    | thankful   |
| delighted    | lonely    | thoughtful |
| disappointed | loved     | triumphant |
| discouraged  | patient   | wistful    |
| embarrassed  | peaceful  | worried    |
| energetic    | playful   | weary      |

# Feelings Brainstorm

Use this space to write down the feelings you have experienced recently.