

# EXPLORING THE VINEYARD AS A THERAPEUTIC LANDSCAPE: ETHNOGRAPHIC FINDINGS FROM AN INTERDISCIPLINARY INTERVENTION IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH CARE

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## The Vineyard Project

- ~ **Target:** young service users (18-25 y.o.) involved in local viticultural practices.
- ~ **Aim:** Moving from the apparent conflation of recovery and social interaction, the project was designed to engage participants in a one-to-one relationship with vine growers.

## Methods

- Participant observation
- Semi-structured interviews with participants



## Results and discussion

A relational geometry was successfully built around the performance of a practical task: that of filling in a box with manually harvested grape and moving it along the rows of vines. Within each dyad, practical knowledge was conveyed from the experienced worker to the youth. Most importantly, **the performance of a practical activity proved successful in relaxing social norms around talking, lowering the emotional intensity of the encounter, allowing non-verbal communication and normalizing silence.**

These findings expose the **resources that place can engender to promote recovery.** Since therapeutic qualities are not intrinsic to a place, but emerge as beneficial through place-making processes, such insights can inform mental health services in the promotion of innovative programs which deploy the resources that come from the identification and cultivation of enabling places in the community.