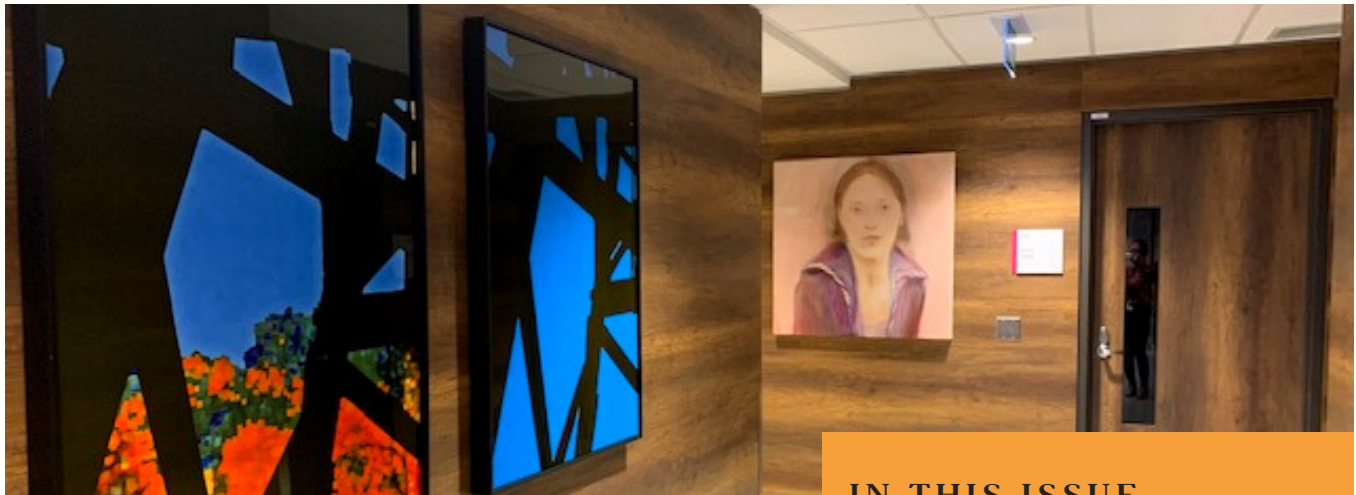


The Al & Malka Green Artists' Health Centre



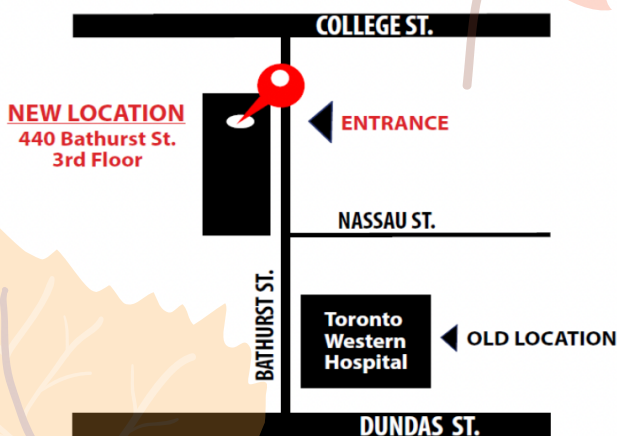
Latest Updates

NEW Location!

We are now fully operating at our new location at **440 Bathurst St, 3rd floor, Suite 310**. Our phone number remains the same: **416-603-5263**

No referrals are required for professional artists!

If this is your first time with us, just call to book an appointment with our Nurse Practitioner for an initial assessment!



Find us on Facebook!



Have you seen us on Facebook? Our team is regularly posting resources and clinic-related updates. Give us a like to stay in the loop!

[Al & Malka Green Artists' Health Centre - Facebook](#)

IN THIS ISSUE

LATEST UPDATES

FREE WORKSHOP
NOVEMBER 2 2021

UNIQUE MENTAL HEALTH
CHALLENGES
EXPERIENCED BY ARTISTS

HEALTH PRACTITIONER'S
SPOTLIGHT & INTERVIEW

PROTECT AND IMPROVE
YOUR WELL-BEING

COVID-19 RESOURCES
AND SUPPORTS



Free Workshop

Tuesday, November 2, 7:00 - 8:00 pm (ET)

Keys to Contract Negotiation: De-mystifying Contracts



This workshop is hosted by a lawyer who specializes in drafting and negotiating contracts in the arts sector. He will provide legal information that can put you in the driving seat during a contract negotiation, and he will answer the following questions and more: What are the common stumbling blocks in a negotiation? What strategies have been used to overcome these challenges and reach a successful outcome? And what are standard features and flaws in the most common contracts in our sector? Check out the link above and sign up now!



Health Practitioner's Spotlight

Susan Lucas, RP, CTP Dipl

Susan helps clients build tools and strategies to heal and be successful using Psychodynamic and Sensorimotor methods. The techniques she uses allow clients to repair wounds in their body, mind, and spirit. Susan also offers Couple's Therapy to aid couples in improving their communication.



Interview with Spotlight Practitioner

**"For professional artists, it's not a hobby; it is a profession.
It's their work; it is a career."**

What do you feel are the biggest barriers that prevent artists from seeking out and receiving help for their mental health needs?

Besides financial, I think things like inhibition. Not wanting to reveal, or being afraid to reveal themselves to a "stranger". Which is another reason why psychotherapy is very relational - because it's partly relationship building. The work together is building a trust between the two of us. You know.... that I'm not going to judge them. "And if I do say something that upsets you, it's very important for you to tell me. It's very important for us, our work" to talk about that, so that we can repair it. And that's good for the therapy, but it's also teaching them how to communicate with people in their life. Because often, one of the issues is not being able to be really direct with loved ones or colleagues or co-workers.

What role does meditation & mindfulness play in helping artists improve their mental health?

That's a really interesting question because, sometimes, for some people it doesn't work at all. It's just too "airy-fairy" for them. It just doesn't work. But for a lot of artists, it does help, and does help to ground them. It's not a cure-all, but I try to support and encourage artists to do it anyway. Even if you don't think it's helping, just do 10 minutes a day. It doesn't have to be half an hour. Also, it does take a long time [to develop the skill], and so it's an [ongoing] practice.

Do you find that mental health issues lead to creative blocks or vice versa?

I think it's both. I think it's sometimes mental health issues like poor self-esteem, or negative self-talk or criticism can lead to creative inhibition. And, creativity is a cycle, it's not just a constant level. So sometimes if there is a long period of quietness, then that can be a bit depressing, and start to create doubts and worries and fears. So I think they interact, really.

How important is it to find the right therapist?

The right fit is extremely important in my opinion. Because part of the therapy is the relationship with the therapist. Now, psychodynamic therapy is very relational and it's important to have a feeling that the therapist understands you, that the therapist empathizes, and has your best interests in mind. And that they're not just doling out a formula. You know, that they really see you. And also I like to emphasize that if you meet with a therapist, and it doesn't feel right, it doesn't necessarily mean that they're a bad therapist. All it means is that they're not a good fit for you, and you can interview other therapists till you find a better attunement.

What role do friends and family play in helping an individual maintain their physical and mental well-being?

Well, we're all social beings. You know, we are a herd. And we need each other. There's a scale of introversion and extraversion and a lot of people are sort of in the middle, but some people are really on the introverted side, and some people are really on the extroverted side. The introvert does need to engage and be around people, but not as much as the extrovert. So, if introverts and extroverts are at a party, the introverts are ready to go home 10:30pm, and the extroverts are there till 1am closing down the joint. The introverts are tired, and they've had a good time, they're happy, but they're ready to go home.

How do you counsel artists on preventing creative burnout?

Pacing. It's very individual. Some people push themselves too hard because they're anxious, and they're afraid of losing ground. And for some people, their nervous system [and] their body just operates at a faster speed - it's just natural. But it's still important to pay attention, and be tuned in and make sure that you get enough rest and play time.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed are those expressed by the practitioners and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Artists' Health Centre.

Unique Mental Health Challenges Experienced by Artists

Artists experience several unique mental health challenges. These challenges are both found within the masterpieces artists produce as well as the personal struggles that peripherally surround their lives. Treating mental health challenges among artists remains a challenge due to the diverse etiologies underlying their illnesses and professional diversity with regards to the type of art that is practised.

Stigma regarding mental health continues to permeate artistic communities. To this day, people continue to controversially debate whether van Gogh's mental health issues propagated further masterpieces or dampened his artistic abilities.¹ Instead, a more pragmatic approach might be to simply ask: why is the artistic community significantly more vulnerable to mental health challenges and what can we do to tangibly help?

Formative studies have suggested that artists face heightened mental health challenges due to the positive correlation between creativity and mental health issues. This community of professionals is at a heightened risk for suicide and significantly more vulnerable to mood disorders, depression, and anxiety.²⁻⁴ Other more contemporary hypotheses suggest that the occupational strain produced by a career in the arts are key to these unique mental health challenges. Artists are significantly more likely to find their work devalued in contemporary times, in addition to competition for jobs and the volatility associated with self-employed occupations.⁵ Despite the growing body of evidence suggesting that additional resources need to be allocated to support professional artists, further funding, research and support programs are still in progress.

References:

1. Preti A, Miotto P. Suicide among Eminent Artists. *Psychological Reports*. 1999 Feb;84(1):291-301.
2. Gross SA, Musgrave G. Can Music Make You Sick? Measuring the Price of Musical Ambition [Internet]. University of Westminster Press; 2020 [cited 2021 Sep 30]. Available from: <http://dx.doi.org/10.16997/book43>
3. Jones J. The whole truth about Van Gogh's ear, and why his "mad genius" is a myth. *The Guardian* [Internet]. 2016 Jul 12 [cited 2021 Sep 30]; Available from: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2016/jul/12/vincent-van-gogh-truth-about-ear-exhibition-on-verge-of-insanity-amsterdam>
4. Stack S. Suicide among artists. *The Journal of Social Psychology*. 1997 Feb 1;137(1):129-30.
5. Barker KK, Soklaridis S, Waters I, Herr G, Cassidy JD. Occupational strain and professional artists: A qualitative study of an underemployed group. *Arts & Health*. 2009 Sep;1(2):136-50.

Protect and Improve your Well-being

The pandemic had a significant impact on the arts due to cancellations of performances, exhibitions, and festivals. We urge everyone to keep their mental health in mind and protect yourself from physical injury as you begin returning to work. Here are several health tips to consider:

1. Do a Self Check-In

Practice self-compassion and connect with mentors, peers, and friends regularly. Check in with healthcare practitioners to monitor your mental health and learn about the resources that are available to you.



2. Meditate

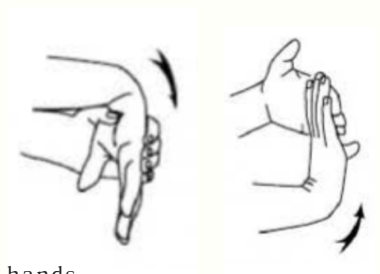
Take a few minutes each day to clear your mind and focus on your breathing, making sure to take slow, deep breaths. Mindfulness meditation can relieve stress, lower blood pressure and improve your sleep quality.

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention>

3. Stretch Out

Try stretching out your wrist before and after working on a piece. You can even do this while taking breaks in between. Be careful not to overstretch - this should not be painful! End off by giving your hands a good shake!

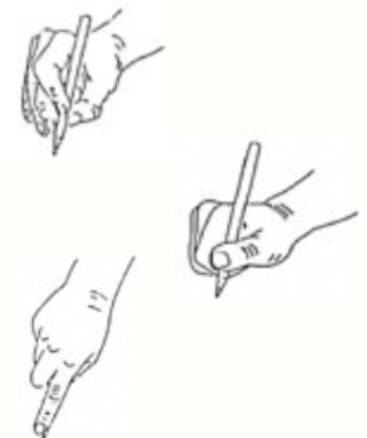
Source: <https://www.health.harvard.edu/pain/exercises-for-pain-free-hands>



4. Posture

Adjust your chair so that your feet are flat on the ground and your shoulders are pulled back. This will maintain the natural curve of your spine and prevent back injury. You can also use cushions or rolled towels to provide low-back support if necessary.

Source: <https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/ergonomics/sitting>



5. Vary your Grip

When you work, make sure the grip on your pencil, paintbrush, or other tool is relaxed. Try altering your grip to give breaks to different muscles of your hand!

COVID-19 Resources and Supports

Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy (CERS)

Government of Canada / Gouvernement du Canada



Have a small business? Struggling with rent? See if you qualify for the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy. The next application deadline is October 7th, 2021. Check out [Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy](#).

The Arts & Entertainment Plan®

health insurance plan offered for artists. This coverage includes dental, medical, prescription, and travel-related healthcare costs. [Click here](#) to learn more!



Artists Advantage

Membership-based plan that offers discounts to members. Discounts range from artistic supplies, to travel, to digital marketing and more. Check it out at [Artists Advantage](#).



Canadian Association for the Performing Arts

Members-based association offering various programs, community involvement, and research initiatives to artists. Learn more about CAPACOA by clicking [here](#)!



Artist Producer Resource

A free online encyclopedia of information, resources, tools, and templates for producing independent performance work in Canada.

Follow this link: Artistproducerresource.ca

