



GESHER
HUMAN SERVICES

THE CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS PROGRAM

Arts Participation in Action



PRESENTER
CRAIG NOWAK
Creative Expressions Program Manager

ABOUT

- CEP Manager at Geshar Human Services since 2019
- Art Teacher with Community Arts Partnership since 2017
- Professional Artist since 2002
- Gallery Manager (two separate galleries), 2005 and 2011
- BFA in Fine Arts from the College for Creative Studies, 2006
- Art Skills: Painting, sculpting, drawing, photography, writing, design, animating, illustrating, art curating, and more

CREATIVE *Expressions*

a **GESHER** program

HUMAN SERVICES

So, what is
"CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS"?

CREATIVE *Expressions*
a GESHHER program
HUMAN SERVICES

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

- Gesher Human Services program
- Established in 2018
- Guided by a council of community stakeholders
- Funded primarily by philanthropy
- Driven by participant interests and ideas



CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Creative Expressions provides arts programming to participants of Gesher Human Services.

It has a multi-disciplinary arts focus made possible by a broad group of community partners who provide **ARTS PARTICIPATION** opportunities in all their **MODES** and **FORMS**.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

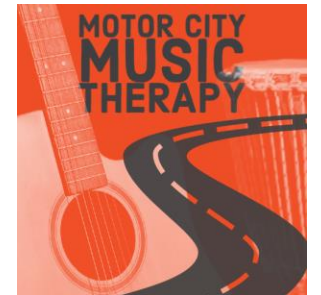
CREATIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

MATRIX
THEATRE COMPANY



 DETROIT
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

Detroit
Opera



Creative Arts
THERAPIES, INC.



OPENSPOT
THEATRE



LET'S *Art*
ABOUT IT

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Creative Expressions is only available to participants with a diagnosed

- Mental illness (MI or SMI)
- Intellectual or developmental disability (IDD)
- Seniors (with and without onset dementia)



IN CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Participants and professionals work as one to help stimulate a stigma-free environment.

Here, actors from Matrix Theatre perform alongside Creative Expressions actors. There is no separation between the two. In performances like this, they all have a role to play, and there is no hierarchy. All are treated as equal.



IN CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Participants are given the opportunity to enter art competitions at local galleries as professionals without being labeled as Geshher clients or MI.

Here, artists and staff stand together alongside artwork that's been juried into an exhibition. They attended the show together, as artists and art appreciators, only. 100% [stigma-free](#).

IN CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Participants are listened to. Staff take time to understand their goals, and if they choose to do so, participants are empowered to pursue a passion project.

Here, a Creative Expressions writer stands with actors from Matrix Theatre who just performed his play. The mere act of being able to pursue artistic passion, is something that **leads to positive mental health recovery**. Prior to this experience, the writer would avoid social interaction entirely.



IN CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Participants not only work with professional arts practitioners; they also sometimes work with certified Art and Music Therapists to help promote positive mental health recovery through Creative Arts Therapy.

Here, a certified music therapist from Creative Arts Therapies Inc directs a group of musicians while a cellist and flautist from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra accompany their performance.





IN CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

We work with Geshar programs that already have a well-developed community. That built-in community allows Creative Expressions to help participants **facilitate recovery through social inclusion and creative collaboration more easily.**

Here, Geshar's **Skill Building** participants celebrate the successful completion of their Arts Profession tours at The College for Creative Studies.



IN CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

We depend on those other programs to provide social structure . Social inclusion and creative collaboration would be much more difficult without the built-in community that comes with The Choices Program, for instance.

Here, participants work with staff and teaching artists from The College for Creative Studies to devise and produce a mosaic that represents their Geshher community.



IN CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

We also try to work with every community in a way that will help them **facilitate recovery through social inclusion and creative collaboration**. Arts participation is not a tool that Creative Expressions alone uses.

Here participants learn to take photos, a skill that they will take back to their business unit and use in their work-ordered-day.

So, what is
"ARTS PARTICIPATION"?

ARTS PARTICIPATION

DEFINITION

The act of making and/or consuming creative product for the purposes of education, appreciation, emotional expression, self-discovery, community development, or social and cultural connection.

Arts Participation can also be broken down into different participatory **ART MODES** and different types of **ART FORMS**.

ARTS PARTICIPATION

WHAT ARE "ART MODES"?

ART MODES are **ways** in which people engage, including informal, formal, live, virtual, individual, and group participation.

Note: The following images are examples of various art modes. The images feature actual Gesher participants and Creative Expressions activities.

ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART MODES

EXAMPLES

- Attending live arts and cultural events and activities



ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART MODES

EXAMPLES

- Attending live arts and cultural events and activities
- **Creating, practicing, performing, and sharing art**



ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART MODES

EXAMPLES

- Attending live arts and cultural events and activities
- Creating, practicing, performing, and sharing art
- Participating in social, civic, spiritual, and/or cultural arts practices



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ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART MODES

EXAMPLES

- Attending live arts and cultural events and activities
- Creating, practicing, performing, and sharing art
- Participating in social, civic, spiritual, and/or cultural arts practices
- Consuming arts via electronic, digital, or print media
- **Learning with, through, and about the arts**



ARTS PARTICIPATION

WHAT ARE "ART FORMS"?

ART FORMS are **disciplines** with which people engage

Note: the examples provided are intended to suggest a broad range and are not intended to note every possible art form. We believe that the arts can be found in almost every part of contemporary life. The images herein are of Gesher participants and Creative Expressions activities.

ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART FORMS

Visual Arts/Craft/Design

- Plein Air Painting
- Photography & Printmaking
- Sculpture & Installation
- Fashion Design
- Graphic Novel & Storybook Illustration
- Mural Painting & Mosaic
- Crafts & Ceramics
- Product & Graphic Design
- Studio Arts / Professional Practice



Drumming performed by Terri S with Drums on The Run

creative expressions







ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART FORMS

Music

- Music Groups
- Instrument Lessons
- Vocal Coaching
- Drum Circle
- Concert Attendance
- Virtual Listening Groups
- Music Writing & Conducting
- Mentorships
- Opera







ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART FORMS

Theatre/Performance/Dance

- Theatrical Production
- Pantomime
- Theatre Attendance
- Dance & Movement
- Stage Design
- Puppetry
- Costume Design
- Comedy
- Spoken Word





ONWARD

2022 LITERARY ARTS MAGAZINE



ARTS PARTICIPATION

ART FORMS

Literary arts

- Short Fiction
- Biographical Writing
- Poetry & Prose
- Storytelling
- Screenwriting
- Children's Literature
- Graphic Novels
- Journaling
- Blogging







THE END





OBJECTIVES

LEARN THE BENEFITS OF ARTS PARTICIPATION

How arts participation can

- stimulate a stigma-free environment
- promote positive mental health recovery
- facilitate recovery through social inclusion and creative collaboration

THANK YOU

Learning Objective 1

- Learn about the importance of Arts Participation for people with mental health challenges and how Arts Participation can help stimulate a stigma-free environment
- Citation: Wang, S., Mak, H. W., & Fancourt, D. (2020). Arts, mental distress, mental health functioning & life satisfaction: Fixed-effects analyses of a nationally-representative panel study. *BMC Public Health*, 20, 1-9.

Learning Objective 2

- Learn ways that Arts Participation can be used to promote positive mental health recovery
- Citation: Chiang, M., Reid-Varley, W. B., & Fan, X. (2019). Creative art therapy for mental illness. *Psychiatry research*, 275, 129-136.

Learning Objective 3

- Learn how Arts Participation by people with lived experience can facilitate recovery through social inclusion and creative collaboration
- Citation: Reis, G., Bromage, B., Rowe, M., Restrepo-Toro, M. E., Bellamy, C., Costa, M., & Davidson, L. (2022). Citizenship, social justice and collective empowerment: living outside mental illness. *Psychiatric Quarterly*, 93(2), 537-546.

Additional Reference

- Novak-Leonard, J., Baach, P. E., Schultz, A., Farrell, B., Anderson, W., & Rabkin, N. (2014). The changing landscape of arts participation: A synthesis of literature and expert interviews.
- Sonke, J., Rodriguez, A. K., Colverson, A., Akram, S., Morgan, N., Hancox, D., ... & Pesata, V. (2023). Defining "Arts Participation" for Public Health Research. *Health Promotion Practice*, 15248399231183388.

OBJECTIVE 1

(might be labeled as 2 on your CEU handout)

ARTS PARTICIPATION can help stimulate a stigma-free environment

According to the authors of "Arts, Mental Distress, Mental Health Functioning, & Life Satisfaction:

- Frequent arts participation and cultural attendance were associated with lower levels of mental distress and higher levels of life satisfaction, with arts participation additionally associated with better mental health functioning.
- Arts engagement amongst the population as a whole may help enhance positive mental health and life satisfaction and protect against mental distress.

OBJECTIVE 2

(might be labeled as 1 on your CEU handout)

ARTS PARTICIPATION can help promote positive mental health recovery

Although the article, "Creative Art Therapy for Mental Illness" focuses primarily on Creative Art Therapy (CAT), we believe that CAT is a form of arts participation and that arts participation, regardless of CAT, can be therapeutic. From the article:

- Increasingly, clinicians have turned towards creative art therapy (CAT) and other psychotherapy in addressing the health needs of patients..
- The concept of CAT encompasses a variety of methods including musical engagement, visual art, movement and dance, drama/theater, and expressive/creative writing

Note: Creative Expressions does work with art and music therapists for specific services but does not define the services as "therapy".

OBJECTIVE 3

ARTS PARTICIPATION can facilitate recovery through social inclusion and creative collaboration

The primary focus of the paper, "Citizenship, social justice, and collective empowerment..." is not specifically mental health, but the underlying meaning is relevant to Creative Expressions' goal to help participants re-enter social environments, empowered and stigma-free.

- people who have lived experiences of mental health challenges and engaged in making community connections should be at the center of teaching about those experiences. Presenters shared their experiences about how they navigated stigma and discrimination on their way to community inclusion, belonging, and empowerment.
- "Art is a way that I can express myself outside of my body. It isn't for people to understand you. It is for you to understand yourself better. It is crucial for people to express themselves through art. I use art to talk about mental illness and express myself. I talk about stigma reduction in people's minds" (presenters during New England MHTTC roundtable)

Additional Notes

ART FORMS

(art forms or disciplines with which people engage; the examples provided are intended to suggest a broad range and are not intended to note every possible art form)

- [Dance/Movement](#) (such as aerial, ballet, ballroom, ceremonial, contemporary, cultural, hip-hop, jazz, step, or tap)
- [Literary Arts](#) (such as storytelling, fiction, nonfiction, short stories, memoir, screenwriting, poetry, literature for children, or graphic novels)
- [Media](#) (such as film, animation, video, or other work at the intersection of technology, aesthetics, storytelling, and digital cultures)
- [Music](#) (such as rap, choral, contemporary, experimental, gospel, instrumental, hip-hop, classical, chanting, rock, electronic, drumming, pop, world, or jazz)
- [Theater/Performance](#) (such as theater, musical theater, devised theater, puppetry, performance art, ritual, opera, spoken word, stage design, circus arts, comedy)
- [Visual Arts, Craft, and Design](#) (such as illustration, painting, drawing, collage, printmaking, installation, photography, gardening, sculpture, video art, street art, pottery, glass, jewelry, metalworking, textiles, fashion, culinary arts, and graphic, floral, architectural, environmental, or industrial design)