

MENTAL HEALTH AND AGING

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IMPACT POINTS

63% of older artmakers less at risk for dementia.

Two-thirds of older adults who frequently dance or play a musical instrument are less likely to develop dementia.

91% meet new people through the arts.

9 out of 10 arts participants report meeting new people and making new friends through their arts experiences.

10 weeks of arts participation to a stronger brain.

The arts literally make your brain grow. Participating in the visual arts for as little as 10 weeks has been shown to increase the resiliency and neural connectivity of the brain, making for increased self-awareness and better memory processing.

9 out of 10 say the arts increase their connection to community.

New friends and connections are a primary positive outcome of arts participation and help to reduce social isolation. In the UK, 91% of participants reported making new friends by participating in arts activities.

The arts make life better.

When older adults participate in the arts, they demonstrated statistically significant higher levels of five positive well-being indicators (interest, sustained attention, pleasure, self-esteem and normalcy).

The arts reduce the risk of dementia by up to 63%.

Activities like dancing, playing an instrument, and reading lower the risk of dementia. Older adults who do at least 11 cognitive or physical activities per month are 63% less likely to have dementia.

Verghese, J. et al. (2003), Leisure Activities and the Risk of Dementia in the Elderly. *New England Journal of Medicine*. Retrieved 18 May 2018 from <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa022252>.

Stern, M. & Seifert, S. (2001). *Culture Builds Communities Evaluation Summary Report*. Philadelphia: Penn School of Social Policy & Practice, University of Pennsylvania. Retrieved 16 May 2023 from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/214208983.pdf>

Bolwerk, A. et al. How Art Changes Your Brain: Differential Effects of Visual Art Production and Cognitive Art Evaluation on

Functional Brain Connectivity. PLOS ONE, 2014, 9(7). Retrieved 16 May 2023 from <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.01010...>

Stern et al., 2001.

Kinney, J. M., & Rentz, C. A. (2005). Observed well-being among individuals with dementia: Memories in the Making, an art program, versus other structured activity. *American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias*, 20(4), 220–227. Reviewed 18 May 2018 in <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/153331750502000406>

Verghese, J. (2006). Cognitive and Mobility Profile of Older Social Dancers. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* 54(8), 1241.

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE



ART FOR EVERYONE

Rockville

Art for Everyone uses an interdisciplinary approach in artistic engagement to accommodate diversity, process, and enticement of participants to put their artistic expression in words, drawing, painting, and sculpture.



CONNECTING THROUGH CREATIVITY

Rockville

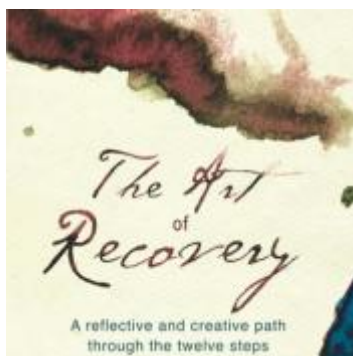
Using visual art, poetry, story and movement in various combinations, participants in Connecting Through Creativity use their imagination to learn about poets and artists while engaging in discussions, writing collaborative stories and poems, and



COGNITIVE DYNAMICS

Tuscaloosa

Cognitive Dynamics is a program that uses various artforms to work with people with cognitive disorders, such as Alzheimer's, and their caregivers. The program provides education, research, and supportive, innovative care models that promote human



ART OF RECOVERY

Artists who have been affected personally, through a family member or friend, or anyone whose art reflects recovery from mental illness or addiction are invited to participate. Artists display works ranging from painting and drawing to sculpture,



ARTS IN HEALING

Cincinnati

The Cincinnati Arts Association's "Arts in Healing" Initiative integrates the performing and visual arts in medical and community healthcare settings and other non-traditional settings

to promote community wellness and encourage our community

READING LIST

[Why art? Exploring the contribution to mental well-being of the creative aspects and processes of visual art-making in an arts and mental health course](#)

Secker, Jenny; Heydinrych, Kirsten; Kent, Lyn; and Jo Keay
Secker, Jenny; Heydinrych, Kirsten; Kent, Lyn; and Jo Keay

Publication Year: 2017

"Conclusions: Previous studies have found play, inspiration and learning to be associated with well-being. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the creative aspects of the courses did play an... [Show More](#) important part in improving

[Show Less](#)

[The Creativity and Aging Study The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on Older Adults Final Report](#)

Cohen, Gene D., M.D., Ph.D
Cohen, Gene D., M.D., Ph.D

Publication Year: 2006

In 2001, the National Endowment for the Arts developed a cooperative agreement with The George Washington University to conduct a multisite national study with the aim of measuring the impact... [Show More](#) of professionally conducted community based cultural

[Show Less](#)

ORGANIZATIONS

[THE FOUNDATION FOR ARTS AND HEALING](#)

The mission of the Foundation for Art & Healing is to use its position as a “bridge” to create and expand general awareness about art and healing, to bring forward through research and related explorations critical knowledge about art and healing and the relationship between them, and to help make this knowledge available at the individual and community level.

[THE HEALING POWER OF ART & ARTISTS](#)

The Healing Power of ART & ARTISTS (HPAA) is a growing global community of artists, advocates, and writers dedicated to raising awareness about how art serves as a positive catalyst for enhancing the well-being of individuals, society, and the environment. It believes that art has the power to heal, inspire, provoke, challenge, and offer hope.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



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LEARN MORE

[AMERICANSFORHEARTS.ORG/SOCIAL IMPACT](https://AMERICANSFORHEARTS.ORG/SOCIAL%20IMPACT)

This fact sheet was developed as part of the **Arts + Social Impact Explorer**

