

# Creative Pathway Webinar Series

## We're advancing arts integration in healthcare and settlement.

Transcript: Melissa Foong — Creative Care share 3.1

How clients respond to the different modalities that we offer in group does depend on the trauma that they've experienced. In terms of newcomers, perhaps their cultural backgrounds, maybe language is a barrier for them, and so there are certain things that might work better than others. But in this case, we leave it up to the client to determine that structure to offering healing.

And so we offer a range of modalities. It includes visual arts, music, movement, storytelling, so creative writing, journaling, and each one offers something different. And so I think the visual arts, music, movement, those are things that transcend language. So, if there is a language barrier, those activities, those prompts, make it much more accessible for everyone to be able to participate.

They all contribute to a sense of emotional regulation. In terms of the visual arts specifically, it's a way for people to communicate. As you say, when words aren't enough, no matter what your background is, or where you're coming from, or what level of art experience that you have, art, visual arts, is a way to be able to process that trauma and communicate that through a non-verbal sort of lens.

We can extract meaning and create symbols that are particularly meaningful for the person who created the artwork. In terms of music, we often incorporate music into our group that helps to reduce things like stress and anxiety. It helps again reinforce that sense of community because we're all creating music together. Movement, again, helps us to reconnect to our bodies, helps rid ourselves of that excess sort of energy. And I think when we can reach a level where we feel comfortable in our own bodies, that in turn increases that sense of safety.

And so, when it comes to storytelling or journaling, when we offer journal prompts in our groups as a way for our group members to reflect on what they've created, and sort of make meaning of their experiences, again, I think that gives them perhaps a stronger sense of identity, taking more control of that narrative as well.

And so, again, all of these help with that emotional regulation. And so, it is difficult to sort of choose just one that would be best. I think this multimodal approach to healing is quite beneficial for participants to engage with because it allows for that flexibility to be able to discover what might work best for them and what might not.

