



The Al & Malka Green Artists' Health Centre



UHN Canada's
Hospital

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Staffing Updates

We're excited to share a few staffing updates at the Centre!



Our **Intake Coordinator, Inthuja Kanagasabapathy**, will begin her maternity leave soon! We're excited for her and are in the process of securing temporary coverage.



We also extend our warmest well wishes in his next chapter to **Ezra Braves**, our **psychotherapist**, whose last day with us was October 29!



We're pleased to welcome **Alicia Luboch** as our new **Digital Communications Coordinator**! She will lead our social media and digital engagement efforts.

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This Issue's Contributors:

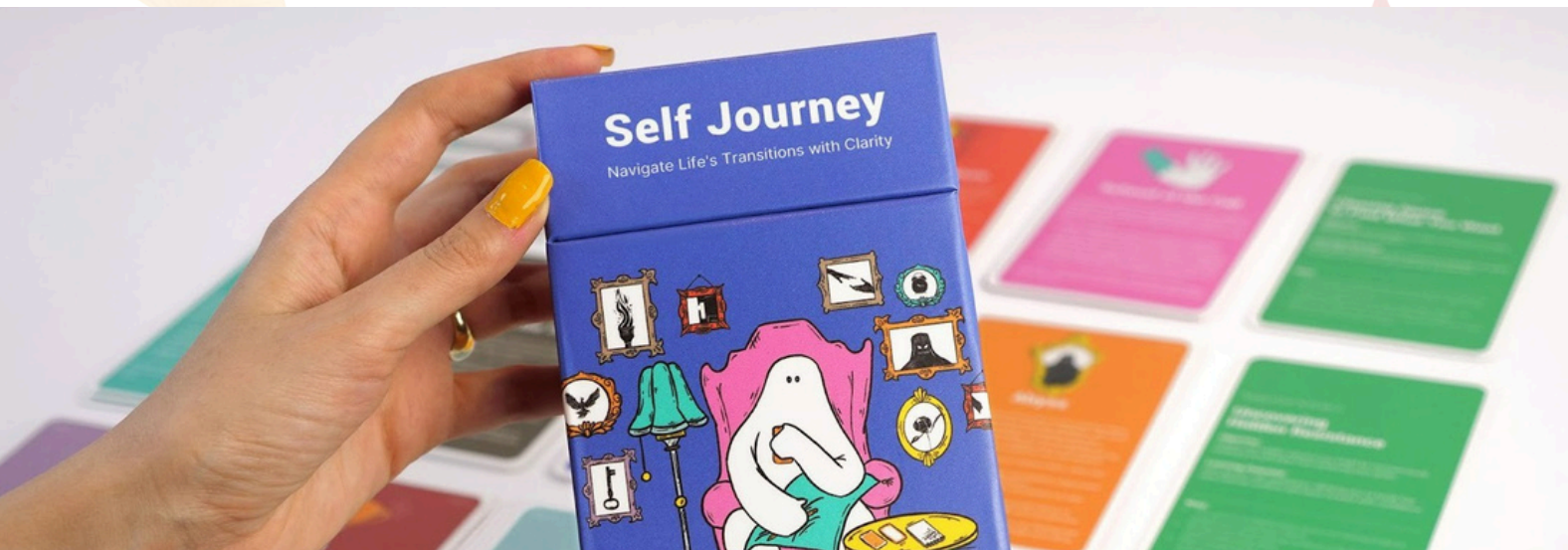
Sara Rashighi, Dr. Shirin Yousefi, Rose Moosavian, Alicia Luboch, Dr. Shelly-Anne Li

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TURNING CHALLENGES INTO A TRIUMPHANT NARRATIVE

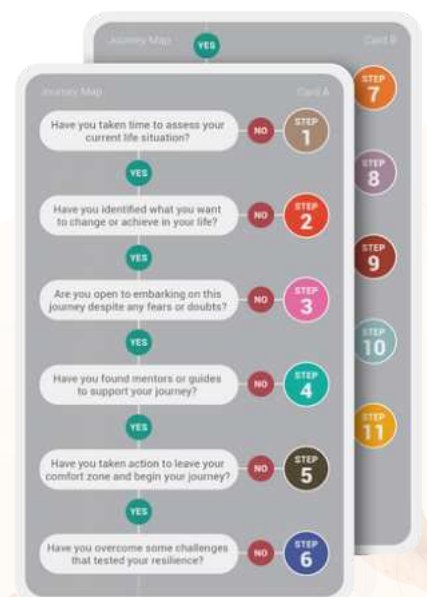
An award-winning self-guided tool



Sara Rashighi of OCAD University has been awarded both the Design and Research Medal and the President's Award for her self-guided tool that reframes setbacks as opportunities for personal growth. **A huge thank you** to the performing artists and mental health professionals who contributed to the co-design and user-testing phases—your insights were essential to shaping this work! This capstone design project, completed as part of Sara's Master of Design for Health under the supervision of Dr. Shelly-Anne Li at The Artists' Health Centre, has now been fully launched!



The Self Journey deck helps you reframe challenges as a personal story, offering space to step back, and navigate change one step at a time. Built around an 11-step roadmap inspired by Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey, it provides practical, evidence-informed activities to support reflection and forward movement.





WWW.MYSELFMENT.COM

Artists often face critique and rejection after months of dedicated time perfecting their craft. Instead of spiraling into self-doubt, the deck helps you identify your stage (“The Abyss”) and offers a step-by-step activity—uncovering the fears beneath your doubt, exploring the beliefs holding you back, and clarifying your next steps. What once felt like a major roadblock becomes a pivotal moment in your journey. Sara Rashighi says, “No one teaches us how to navigate life’s hardest moments. The Self Journey deck offers a simple, stigma-free way to find clarity, courage, and direction when it’s needed most.”



WHAT ARTISTS ARE SAYING:

“I felt lost and confused, but the Self Journey deck helped me face my fears step by step and gently move beyond my comfort zone. Now I feel supported and more confident.”

— Nasim, Artisan





SPOTLIGHT PRACTITIONER

DR. SHIRIN YOUSEFI



Dr. Shirin Yousefi's journey to become a chiropractor was inspired by her 25 years of experience in dance as a performer, choreographer, and teacher. After completing a BFA in Dance at York University, she discovered her love of teaching through dance, yoga, and pilates. She experienced her own successful relief from low back pain through chiropractic treatment and felt a calling to help people address their own pain in the same way. She returned to York U to complete a BSc in Kinesiology and pursued a Doctor of Chiropractic degree at the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College.



Tell us about your role at AHC and describe what a typical day in your practice involves.

I am one of two chiropractors working as a team with a unique whole person approach. A typical day in my practice involves a few new patient intakes and multiple follow up appointments. **In an initial visit I listen and talk with the patient to gather information, perform physical assessments of involved body regions, provide my diagnosis and differentials, and create a treatment plan.** I use a combination of different modalities such as spinal or joint manipulations, soft tissue techniques, acupuncture, and craniosacral therapy depending on the condition I'm treating. At follow up appointments I check in on progress, fine tune treatment, and often give homework of some kind.

What are the most frequent conditions you encounter at the centre?

It's hard to pinpoint just one condition. Most cases are complex, often chronic and involve multiple body regions by the time they arrive in my treatment room. **Unfortunately, many artists just don't have a budget for preventative or maintenance health care and tend to wait until the pain is debilitating.** By that point they have developed compensatory patterns that can impact the whole body. As a chiropractor I do see lots of back pain cases across all artistic disciplines. For instance, I see a lot of lower extremity cases in dancers and performers— hip and knee osteoarthritis, meniscal or ligament tears in the knee, ankle sprains, tendinitis, plantar fasciitis.



What aspects of your role do you find most rewarding? What challenges do you face?

I became a chiropractor to help people. I find it so rewarding to hear that I've helped relieve any degree of pain or disability. It brings me joy to hear, "that's the spot!" and "it actually feels better already!" I'm thrilled to provide a window of opportunity for rehabilitation. My greatest challenges are the limitations to what I can realistically provide or change. I work as a team with many great practitioners who address the biological and psychological components of each of our patients' conditions, and we can recognize and refer to one another when we think another area of expertise may be helpful. I advocate for my patients, helping to remove barriers or access to resources that make a concrete difference in their lives, but I cannot grant a universal basic income or guarantee affordable, secure housing for all. **The social determinants of health are a very real and unfair obstacle for many.**



My treatment plans always incorporate patient education about their condition, along with passive and active care.



How do you collaborate with artists to ensure they receive the care they need?

I try to listen and learn about my patients as much as I can to address their specific concerns. **Evidence based care incorporates research, clinical expertise, and patient preferences to create a custom-tailored treatment plan.** My treatment plans always incorporate patient education about their condition, along with passive and active care. Learning about your anatomy, how injuries occur, and what to expect as you heal goes a long way. Passive care includes manual therapy, acupuncture, and craniosacral therapy. Active care is the "homework" I give my patients, such as exercises, stretches, and self-management strategies.

If a fellow healthcare professional seeks your advice on caring for artists, what would you say?

Listen to the human being in front of you. Believe them. Revisit the basics of your training in patient care and remember what is at the core--people. Artists are the living expression of the human experience, and their work enriches the soul of our society. Share with them the information they need to complete the puzzle.



RESOURCES FOR ARTISTS

Learning about Mental Health Care Services in Ontario



Toronto Western
Family Health Team

REGISTER

In this session, you will learn:

- How the mental health care system works
- What mental health services are available to you
- How to access mental health services

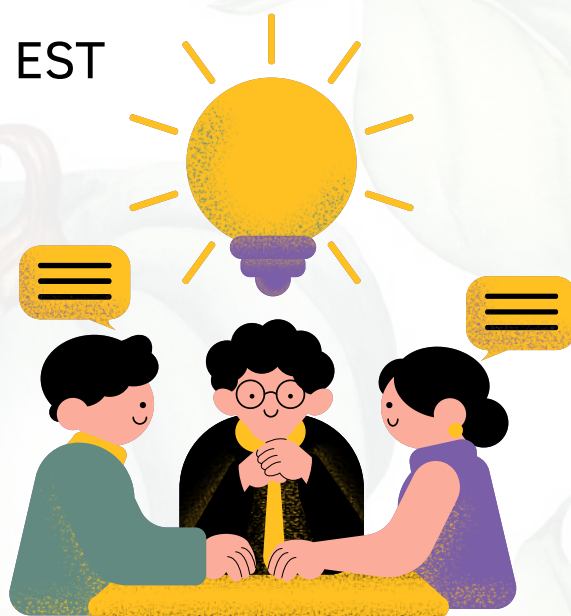
WHERE: Online (Microsoft Teams)

WHEN: December 3rd, 12PM to 1PM EST

Monthly Crit Night!



INFO LINK



At this event, participants are welcome to bring completed artworks or works-in-progress to share and receive feedback and gain insights from fellow artists.

WHERE: In-person at an Akin studio location.

WHEN: 7:30PM to 9PM EST; 2026 dates TBD; sign up for registration details!



WELLNESS TIPS FOR ARTISTS

Nutrition and Healthy Eating for Artists

- Starting the day with a protein-rich breakfast can help boost focus, energy, and creativity.
- Include colourful fruits and veggies into your diet for vitamins that boost mood and immune health.
- Preparing easy and balanced meals ahead of time (meal prepping) can make it much easier to avoid skipping meals when deeply focused.
- It can be helpful to keep a refillable water bottle near your workspace to encourage more water drinking.



Tips to Stay Motivated as an Artist

- Creating a dedicated workspace can help keep you minimize distractions and feel more focused.
- Trying out new styles and mediums will allow you to keep things interesting and inspire creativity.
- Taking breaks to walk around or stretch, particularly in nature, can prevent burnout and spark new ideas.

