



# **CREATIVITY IN RECOVERY**

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**FOR OPTIMAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

# LET'S DANCE!!!!!!!!!!!!



# PRESENTATION FLOW:

- ICEBREAKER: LET'S DANCE!
- INTRO: HI!
- GROUP SHARE: What is Your Pathway to Recovery?
- Why Creativity?
- GROUP DISCUSSION: Creative Programs for Individuals You Serve
- INTRO: VISUALIZATION/MENTAL IMAGERY
- MENTAL IMAGERY ACTIVITY
- COGNATIVE RESTRUCTURING
- 'WHAT IF?' ACTIVITY
- INTRO TO: DRAWING W/OUT JUDGEMENT
- GROUP ACTIVITY: DRAWING
- FINAL THOUGHTS/GROUP DISCUSSION

# INTRO – HI!

- SAMSHA GRANT WRITER
- MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
- DEVELOPMENT
- CREATIVITY IN RECOVERY WORKSHOPS  
FREE TO RCOs
- FORMER JOURNALIST AND PRESS OFFICER
- WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT
- COSPLAY IN RECOVERY

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WHAT IS YOUR  
PATHWAY TO  
RECOVERY?

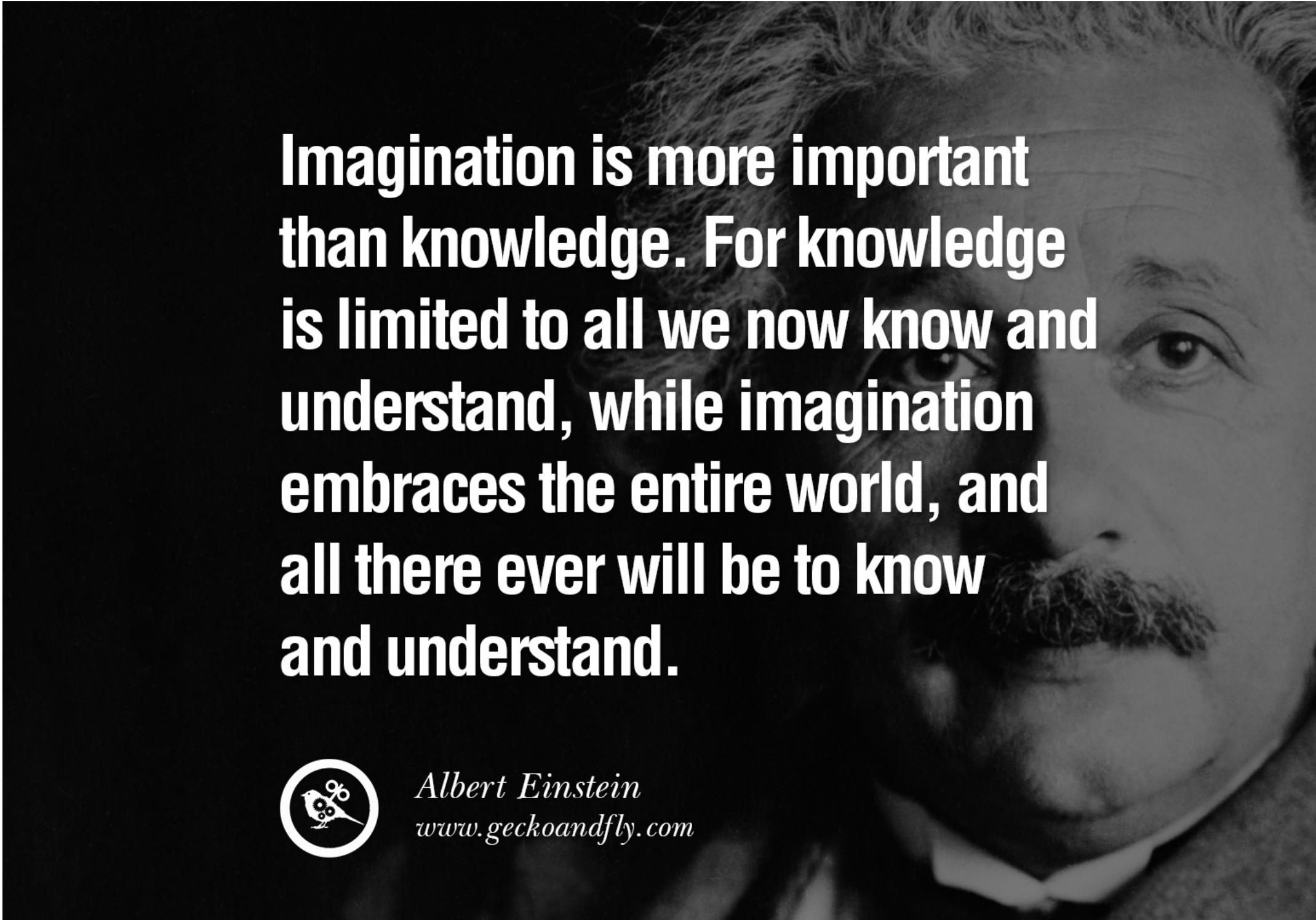
# COMMON RECOVERY PATHWAYS

Mutual aid groups

- 12-step based programs
- Mutual aid groups, non-12-step based programs, (e.g., Women for Sobriety, and SMART Recovery)
- Faith-based recovery
- Cultural recovery (e.g., traditional Native American sweat lodges) ☐ Criminal justice (e.g., incarceration, drug court)
- Outpatient treatment
- SUD Treatment Program
- Mental Health Treatment Program
- Bodywork (e.g., yoga, traditional Chinese medicine, and Addiction Energy Healing)
- Other therapies (e.g., art or music)
- Volunteerism – “giving back “
  - Journalism
  - Meditation



WHY CREATIVITY?



**Imagination is more important  
than knowledge. For knowledge  
is limited to all we now know and  
understand, while imagination  
embraces the entire world, and  
all there ever will be to know  
and understand.**



*Albert Einstein*  
*[www.geckoandfly.com](http://www.geckoandfly.com)*



# CREATIVITY IS A EVIDENCE-BASED WELLNESS PRACTICE

- In 2020, a review of existing literature on the benefits of the arts (music, visual arts, dance and writing) by Stuckey and Noble considered more than 100 studies, concluding that creative expression has a powerful impact on health and well-being on various populations. Most of these studies concur that participation and/or engagement in the arts have a variety of outcomes including a decrease in depressive symptoms, an increase in positive emotions, reduction in [stress](#) responses, and, in some cases, even improvements in immune system functioning. Even engagement in the arts as a viewer can have an impact, but if you really want to benefit from the arts for wellness, studies continue to show that your active participation is the best bet).



ARE YOU CREATIVE?



# BARRIERS TO CREATIVITY

Barriers to creativity can prevent us from unlocking the creative potential that we are all capable of. Being aware of the barriers should prepare you for recognizing when they occur and arm you with the potential to break past them.

- **Functional fixedness:** Functional fixedness is a term used by psychologists and means to only see the obvious ways of looking at a problem.
- **Self Censorship**
- **Micro Management**
- **Over Thinking**
- **Creativity Myths:** Example: Only artists are creative and creativity is rare
- **Image Risks:** Image risks are where people worry about the impression that people will have of them after suggesting an idea
- **Lack of Time**
- **Lack of Sleep**
- **Rules, policies, and procedures:** If the organization that you work in has lots of rules, policies, and procedures then these can sometimes stifle creativity due to the bureaucracy that they create.
- **Fear Of Rejection :** Just having that underlying fear that others will reject your ideas can be a barrier to creativity.
- **Cultural:** Culture can be described as learned behavior patterns that are characteristic of members of a society and which are not a result of biological inheritance.





WHAT IS THE  
BIGGEST BARRIER TO  
CREATIVITY?

## 1. FEAR OF FAILURE

The single biggest reason why most organizations and individuals do not achieve their full creativity potential is fear of failure. There are no guarantees that any new idea will work. We must accept failing is an important part of learning, development and progress.


# HOW DOES CREATIVITY IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS?

- The average person has 60,000 thoughts per day and 95% of them are exactly the same, day in and day out (Cleveland Clinic). Immersing yourself in a creative activity produces an almost meditative state where your mind is so engrossed in what you're doing that you temporarily forget all of your troubles and worries. The goal is no different from meditation, mindfulness, or yoga: in order to find calm, peace, and happiness in one's life, the focus needs to be on one's inner self (not external stimuli). This can be achieved only by becoming disciplined in an activity (eg. creativity) that will naturally lessen the importance and therefore impact of those thousands of thoughts we experience everyday.


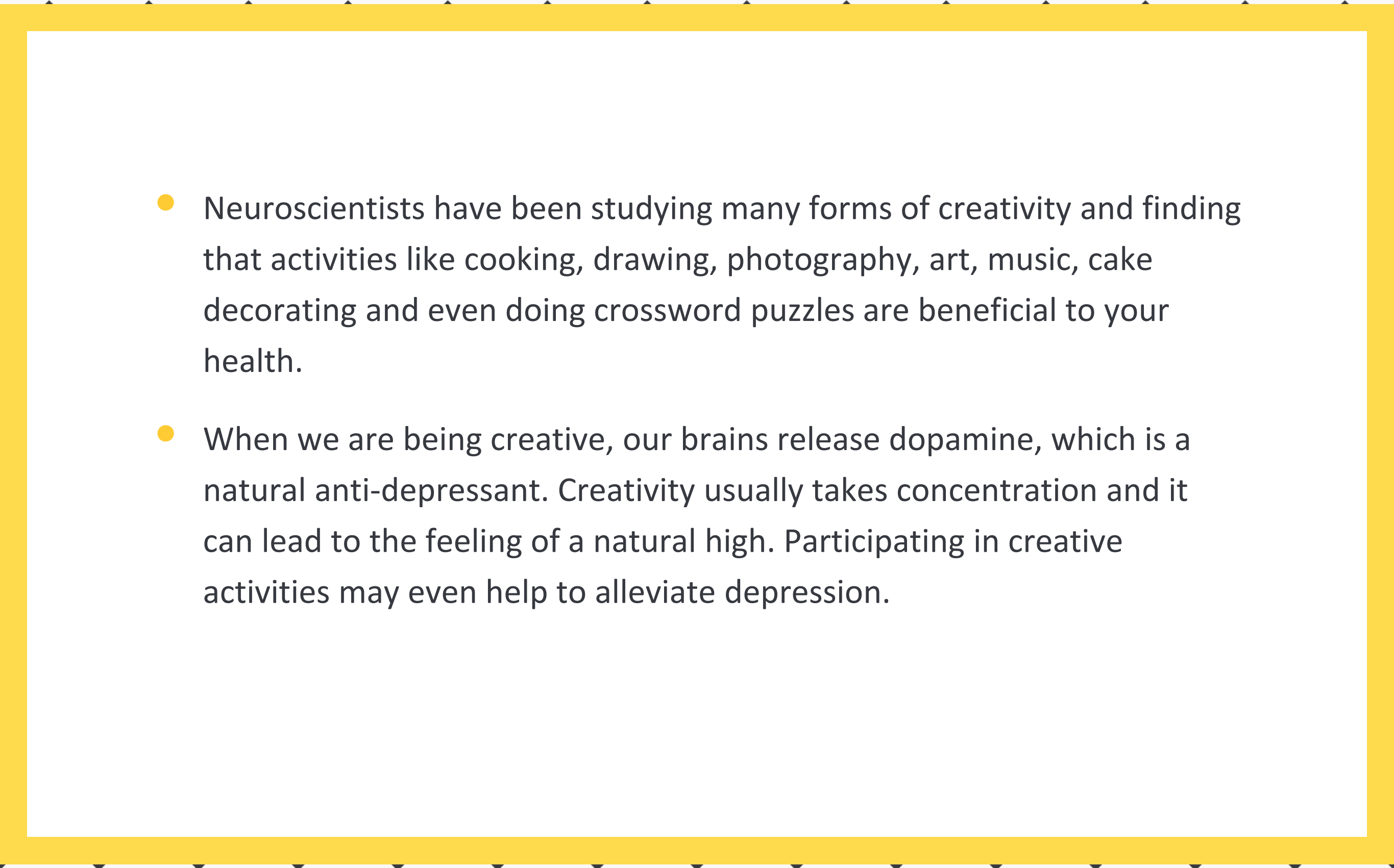



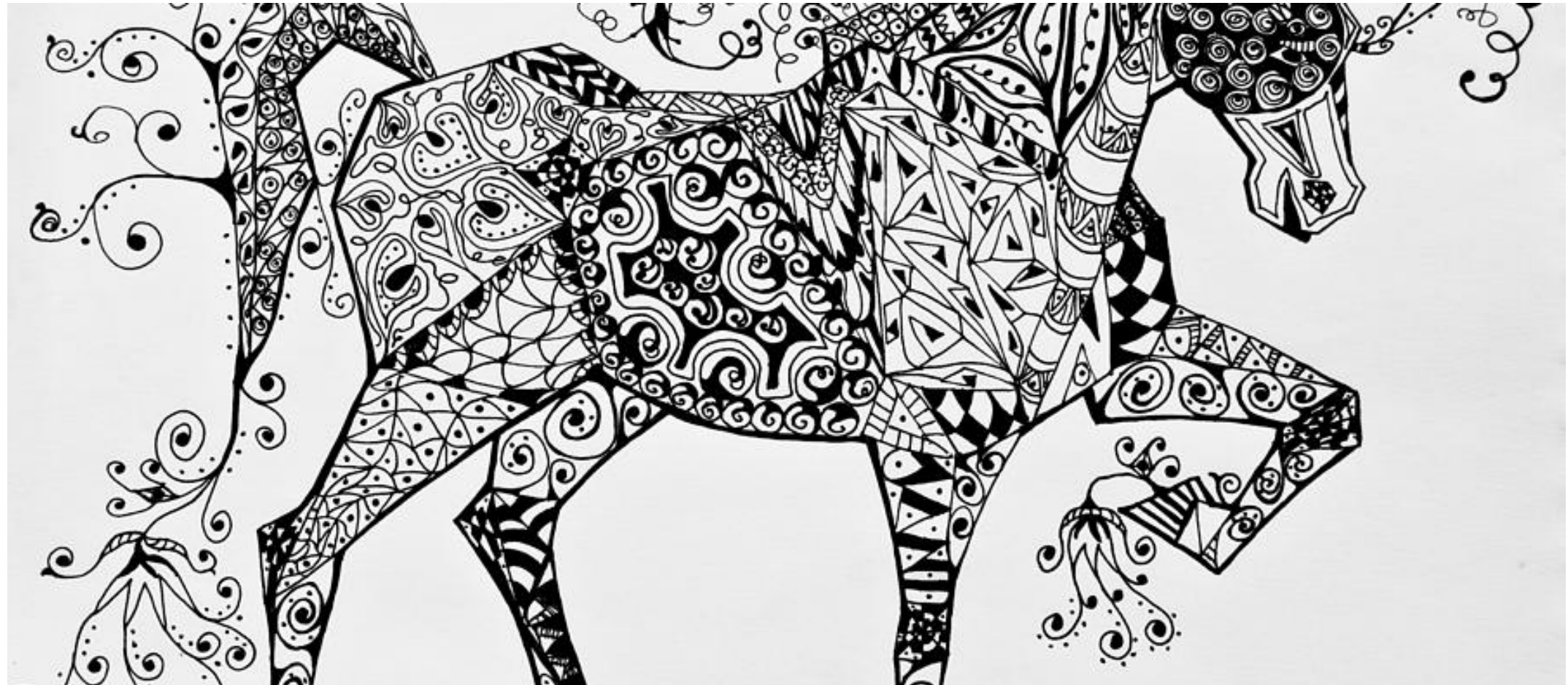
# TAPPING INTO YOUR CREATIVITY FOR IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS

Creative expression can:

- Reduce stress and anxiety
  - Increase positive emotions
  - Decrease depressive symptoms
  - Reduce distress and negative emotions
  - Boost the immune system
  - Increase self-esteem and feelings of accomplishment
  - Improve concentration and focus
  - Increase happiness
- 



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- Neuroscientists have been studying many forms of creativity and finding that activities like cooking, drawing, photography, art, music, cake decorating and even doing crossword puzzles are beneficial to your health.
  - When we are being creative, our brains release dopamine, which is a natural anti-depressant. Creativity usually takes concentration and it can lead to the feeling of a natural high. Participating in creative activities may even help to alleviate depression.
- 



**THE LATEST TREND IN  
STRESS RELIEF IS THE  
ADULT COLORING BOOK**

# CLASS Q & A:

- Who here has a creative hobby they invest in on a daily or weekly basis?
  - What mental health benefits do you gain from your hobby?
- Are we doing enough to cultivate the creativity of the people we serve?
  - And if so, how?
  - If not, why not?
- What creative recovery programs exist currently exist that you know of?

# LET'S PLAY!!!!!!!!!!!!





# MENTAL IMAGERY

*Mental imagery can be defined as pictures in the mind or a visual representation in the absence of environmental input.*

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## What can mental imagery be used for?

Mental Imagery can be used to:

- **Familiarize** the athlete with a

competition site, a race course, a complex play pattern or routine etc.

- **Motivate** the athlete by recalling images of their goals for that session, or of success in a past competition or beating a competitor in competition
- **Perfect skills** or skill sequences the athlete is learning or refining

# Types of mental imagery

- **Visual**

- eg Imagining the movement of a visual form



- **Motor**

- eg imagining your own hand moving



- **Kinaesthetic**

- eg imagining the *feeling* of your hand moving

**FOR OLYMPIANS, SEEING (IN THEIR MINDS) IS BELIEVING (IT CAN HAPPEN)**





# WASHINGTON POST RECENT NEWS:


Before a single event has begun, a single point awarded, a single shot contested, the competitors have already lived these Olympics. They've felt their hand raised, swelled with pride as the national anthem played, felt the medal hang and tug at their neck.

"Every night I visualize myself wining the Olympics," said Kayla Harrison, who will try to defend her Olympic judo title at the Rio Games.

While the collection of athletes assembled in Rio de Janeiro this month are among the most fit and gifted physical specimens on the planet, they also have spent years honing their mental game. For many athletes, regardless of sport, that means relying on visualization techniques taught by sports psychologists and performance coaches.

"When I get there, I've already pictured what's going to happen a million times," said swimmer Missy Franklin, who won four gold medals at the London Games, "so I don't actually have to think about it."

Over the past three decades, visualization — also referred to as imagery or mental rehearsal — has grown in the sports arena and is now commonplace in many Olympic disciplines. Diver Troy Dumais, a four-time Olympian, said athletes can use the techniques to zero in on the specific moment and task awaiting them. They might concentrate on their breathing as they block out the crowd, the television cameras and the stakes. Then it's just the diver standing above the water, separated by only a series of artful twists and flips.








# WASHINGTON POST RECENT NEWS:

“It’s like a painting,” says Dumais, who just missed qualifying for the Rio Games. “A painter doesn’t know the overall finished painting. They have an idea. If they can see it, form it and make it happen, that imagery work is what makes it happen. It’s the same thing with diving. If you can see yourself hitting a dive, the chances of you hitting a dive increase greatly.”

The science increasingly reveals the impact mental training and visualization can have on performance. Richard Suinn is an esteemed sports psychologist who first began working with Olympic athletes in 1972 and has been a proponent of visualization techniques for years. He studied downhill skiers and found that when he asked them to simply imagine skiing, the brain sent electrical signals comparable to when the athlete was actually skiing, and the muscles reacted similarly as well. Other studies have found that visualization exercises also trigger responses from the autonomic nervous system, and there’s been plenty of research to show the practical impact these techniques have on performance.

One study, conducted by Guang Yue, an exercise physiologist at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, asked volunteers to imagine flexing their biceps as hard as possible. After a few weeks of simply visualizing weight training, the subjects showed a 13.5 percent increase in strength. A study out of the University of Chicago asked participants to visualize shooting free throws for a month. They improved their shooting by 23 percent. And a French study found that long jumpers who visualized their jumps and went through the actual motion of the jump performed better 45 percent of the time.

Karen Cogan, a senior sports psychologist for the USOC, says the acrobatic sports, such as diving and gymnastics, especially lean on visualization techniques to master particular movements and routines. “A lot of people in acrobat sports feel like they have to see it and feel it before they can do it,” she said.





**What are the benefits? Mental Imagery itself can be useful in a number of circumstances including:**

- developing [self confidence](#)
- developing pre-competition and competition strategies which teach athletes to cope with new situations before they actually encounter them
- helping the athlete to focus his/her attention or concentrate on a particular skill he/she is trying to learn or develop
- the competition situation

**When combined with [relaxation](#) it is useful in:**

- the promotion of rest, recovery and recuperation
- the removal of stress related reactions e.g. muscular tension
- establishing a physical and mental state which has an increased receptivity to positive mental imagery
- establishing an appropriate level of physical and mental arousal prior to competition




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# CREATIVE WELLNESS ACTIVITY

## #1: MENTAL IMAGERY





# HELPFUL TIPS:



# HAND OVER HEART

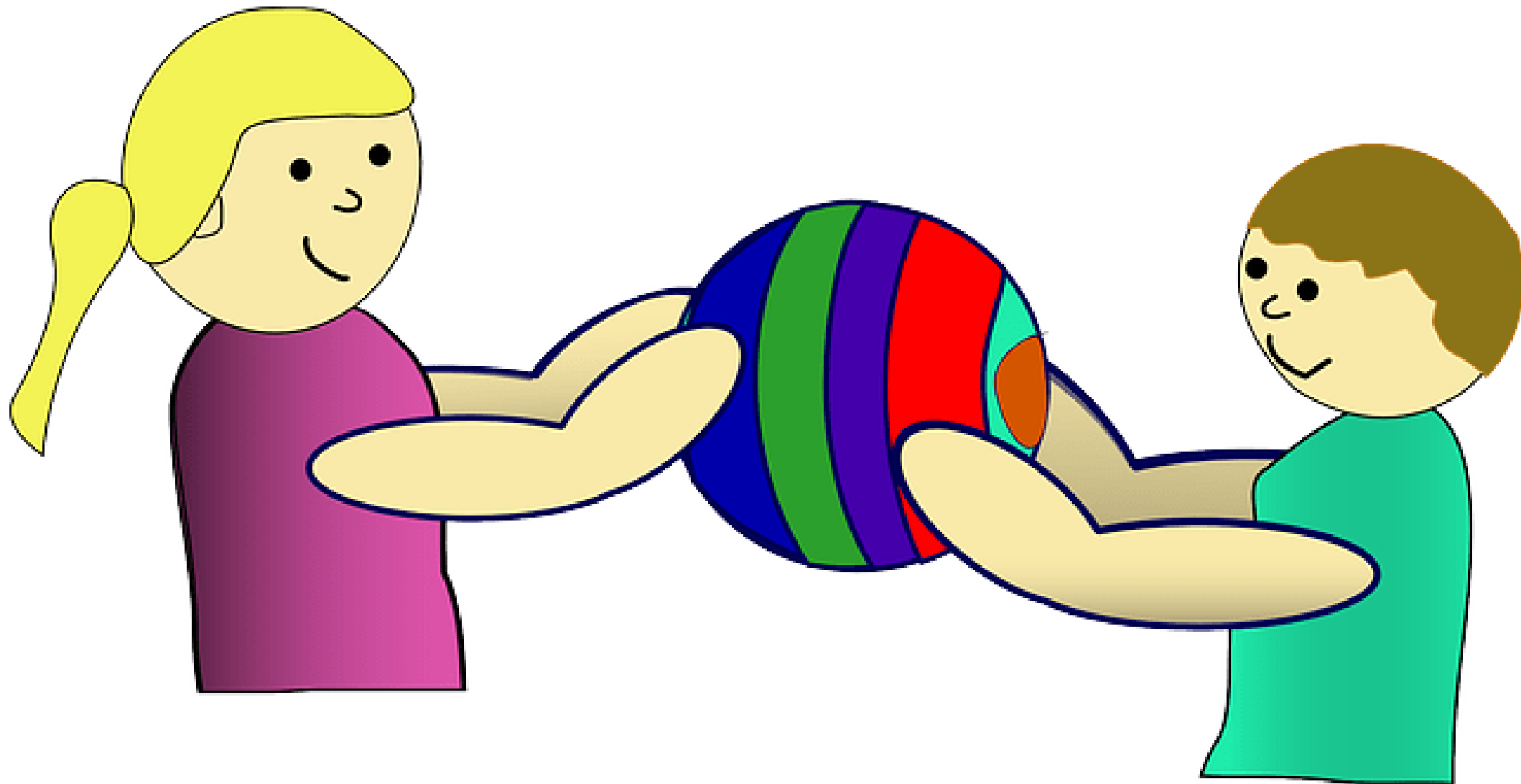




# BEGIN W/ A NON-STRESS SITUATION TO AVOID RESISTANCE



# GROUP SHARE:



# COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

**Cognitive restructuring (CR)** is a [psychotherapeutic](#) process of learning to identify and dispute irrational or maladaptive thoughts known as [cognitive distortions](#),<sup>[1]</sup> such as [all-or-nothing thinking \(splitting\)](#), [magical thinking](#), over-generalization, [magnification](#),<sup>[1]</sup> and [emotional reasoning](#), which are commonly associated with many [mental health disorders](#).<sup>[2]</sup> CR employs many strategies, such as [Socratic questioning](#), thought recording, and [guided imagery](#), and is used in many types of therapies, including [cognitive behavioral therapy](#) (CBT) and [rational emotive behaviour therapy](#) (REBT). A number of studies demonstrate considerable efficacy in using CR-based therapies



# WHAT IF???????

- What if the judge was lenient on me?
- What if the judge had compassion for me?
- What if I met people on my path who understood and didn't judge me?
- What if I could heal my pain?
- What if the end result was better than I could imagine?
- What if, no matter what happened, I felt peace of mind that everything would be ok?

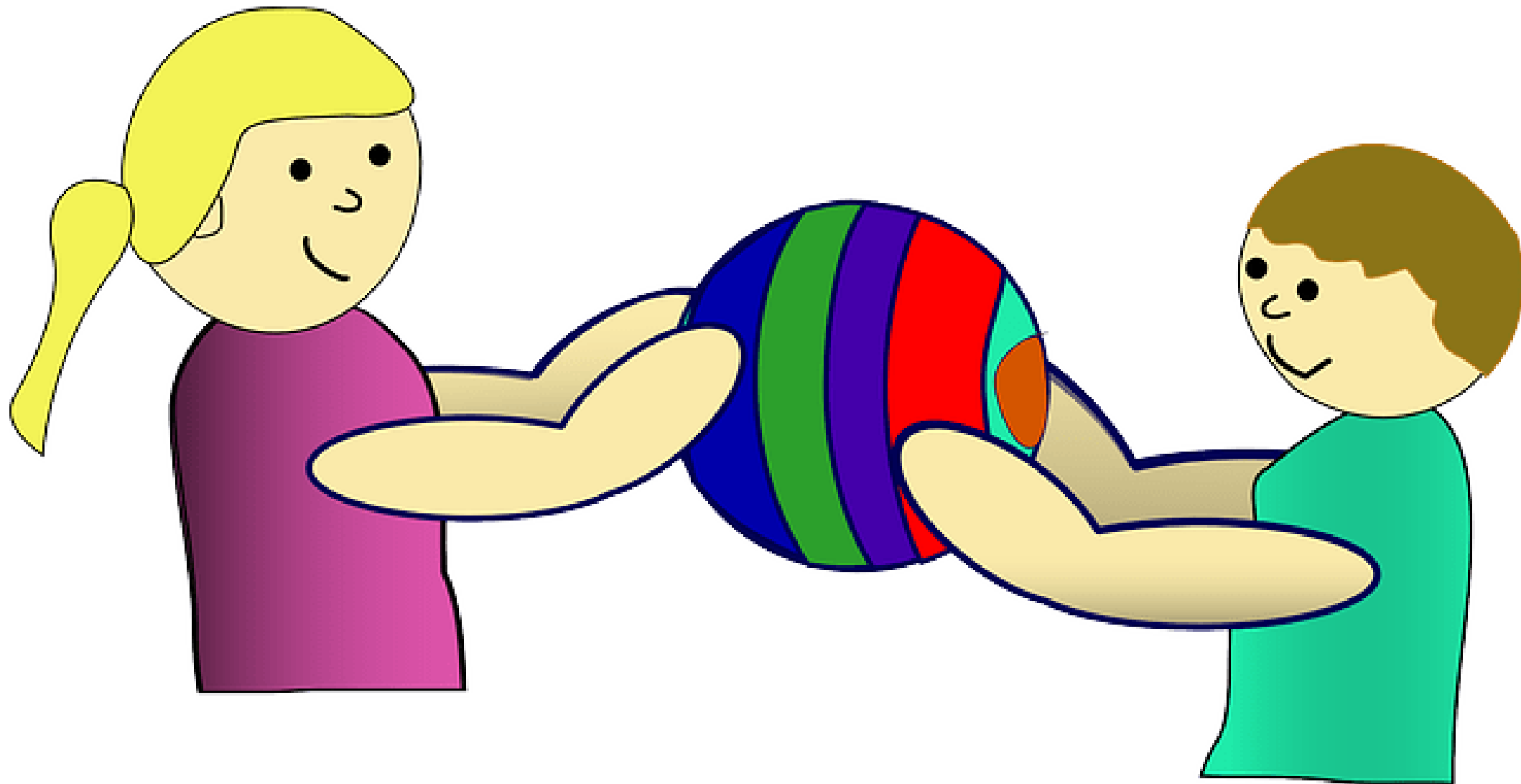
# CREATIVE WELLNESS ACTIVITY

## COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING





# GROUP SHARE:





# HEALTH BENEFITS OF DRAWING

- IMPROVED CREATIVITY
- IMPROVED PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS
- STRESS RELIEF
- INCREASE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
- ENHANCE POSITIVE EMOTIONS
- IMPROVE COMMUNICATION



# CREATIVE WELLNESS ACTIVITY

## #3: DRAWING





**DRAW ME A MADE-UP  
SUPER HERO WITH YOUR  
NON-DOMINANT HAND**



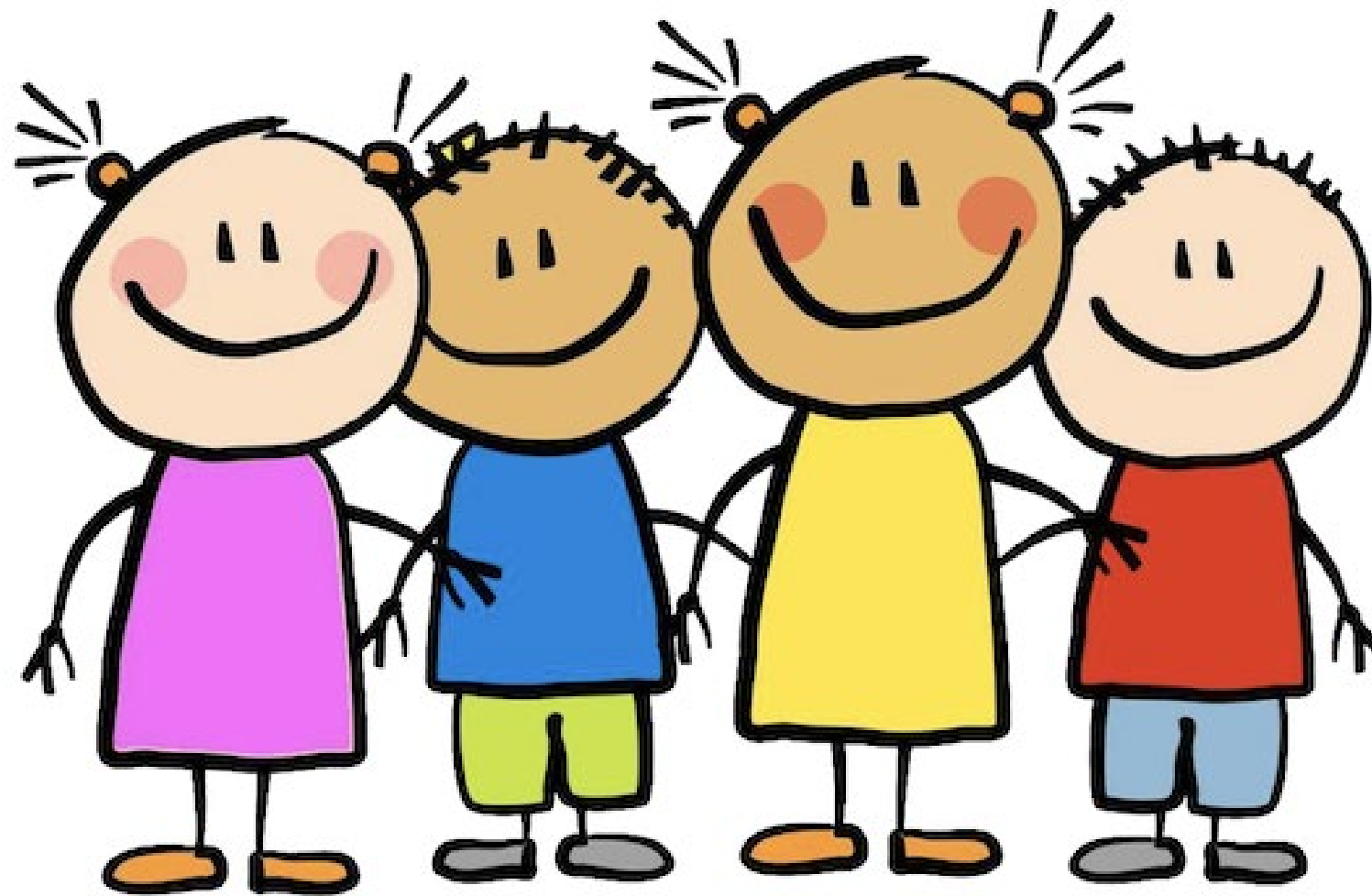
# SUPER HERO GUIDELINES:



- SOLVE A PROBLEM IN YOUR LIFE
- HAVE A SUPER POWER- BE CREATIVE
- HAVE ONE IDENTIFYING SYMBOL ON THEIR SUPER HERO COSTUME
- DOESN'T HAVE TO LOOK A PARTICULAR WAY
- HAVE FUN!!!! NO JUDGEMENT



# GROUP SHARE:





THANK YOU!