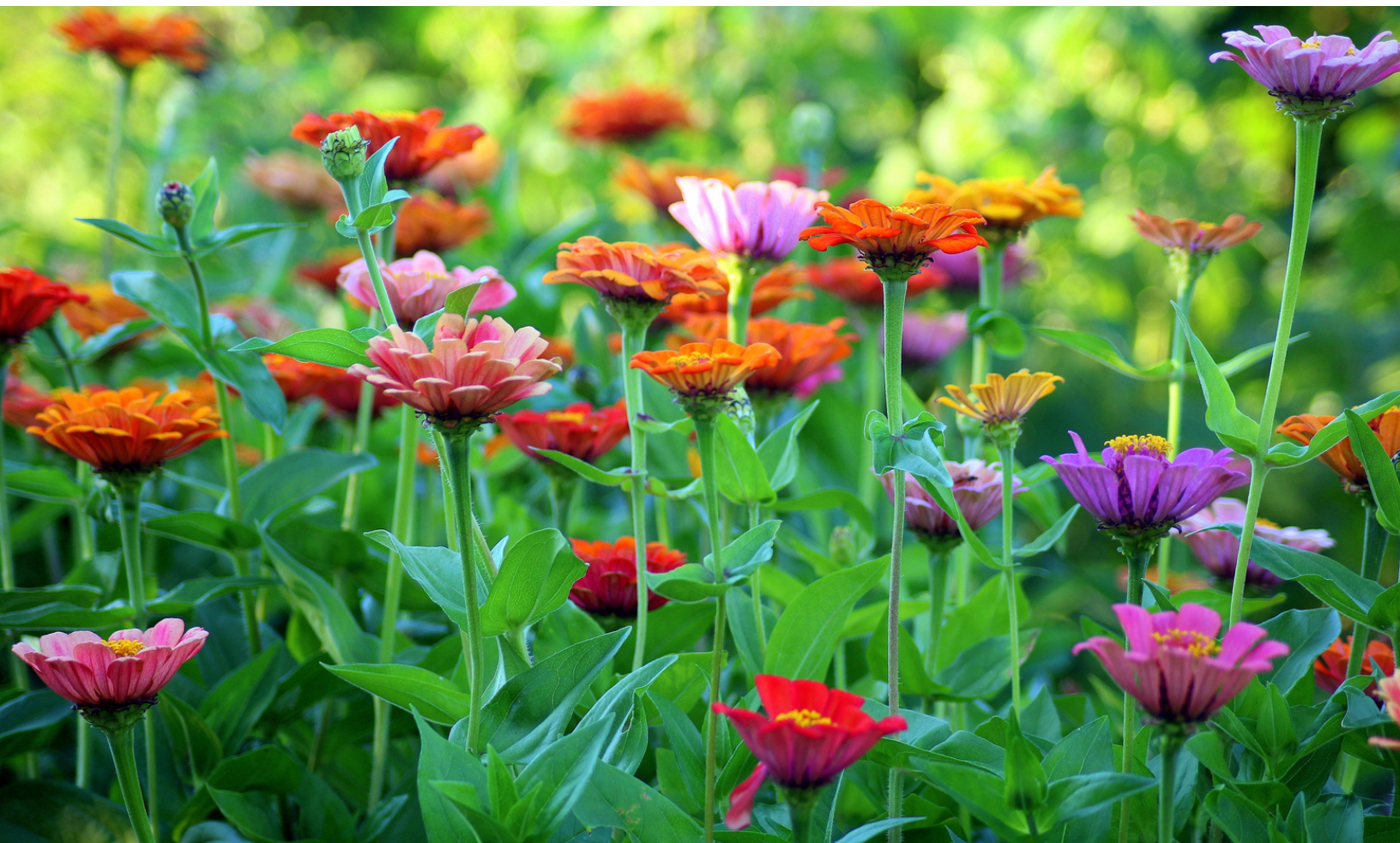


FAMILY MATTERS

Quarterly review by Friends for Mental Health, an organization that provides support and other resources to those close to a person with a mental health issue .



SUMMER 2023

the gardener in you

take care of your joy

Vol. 45 No. 3

the gardener in you

THIS SUMMER, TAKE CARE OF THE GARDEN IN YOU

In this issue, using the theme of the garden, we talk about taking care of your boundaries. This word that comes up so often is essential to your balance and emotional health. Without boundaries, life cannot go the way you want it to.

It is important to recharge your batteries with joy when you are a caregiver, which is why we are offering you a list of things to do that could make you happy!

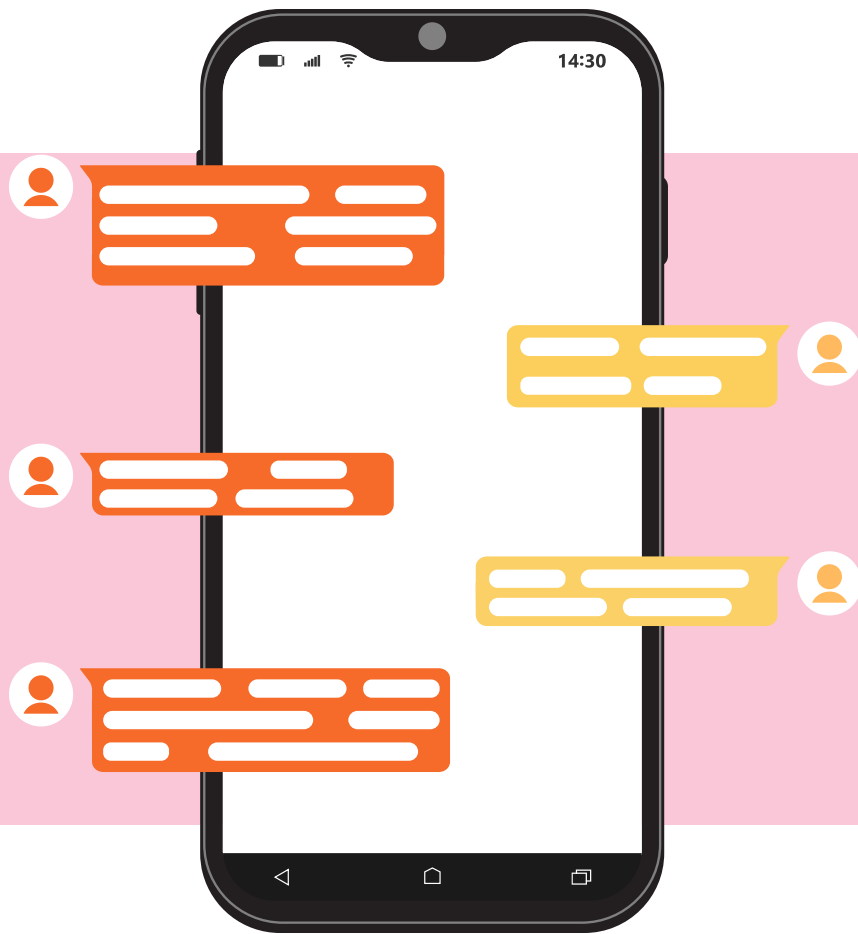
OUR NEW GUIDE IS OUT!

During our Annual General Meeting, we launched our brand new regional guide, The Caregiver's Ally in Mental Health.

It's the only publication available on the West Island to help members of the entourage of a person living with a mental health issue.

Come pick it up! Available in our offices!





TEXTING SERVICE

for youth aged 12 to 25

Do you have questions about a family member or friend's mental health condition?

Have you heard about our new chat service?

“Don't hesitate to ask me any questions you may have so that you can better understand mental health and take steps to take care of yourself!”

- Andreea

Text me at **438-922-0500** every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, from 5 PM to 8 PM.

team

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M.A. Dramatherapy

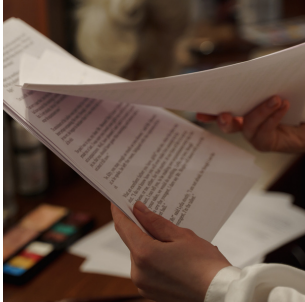
Samantha Dobbin
M.A. Art Therapy

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Friends for Mental Health

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content



DRAMATHERAPY

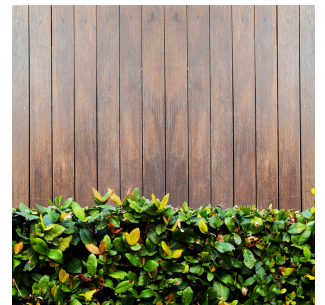
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GABRIEL COUTU

EVERY GARDEN NEEDS A FENCE

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HOPE JAIKARANSINGH



VOLTAIRE SAID IT RIGHT - YOU MUST CULTIVATE YOUR OWN GARDEN

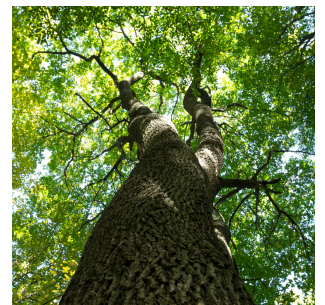
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ANDREEA CALIAN

THE TREE OF VALUES

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SAMANTHA DOBBIN



REMINDER



Caregivers often feel guilty about taking time for themselves.

Experiencing joy and pleasure when the person being cared for is unwell is a sensation that can be possible with time and practice

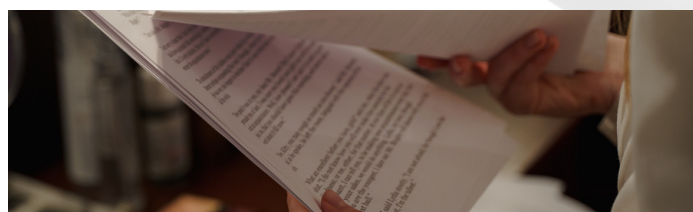
Visit our YouTube channel and watch '**Living better with guilt is possible**' by Elaine Clavet. This conference, rich in tools, will help you to better understand this emotion.

DRAMATHERAPY

GABRIEL COUTU

With the idea in mind that you can discover something new about yourself through different activities, Friends for Mental Health has decided to offer a new service: dramatherapy. Dramatherapy is a therapeutic approach that uses the body and theater as a tool of expression for therapeutic purposes. These tools can be used to deepen your relationship with your loved ones, to express your emotions and to explore the different roles you enact in your environment. **Through play, the expression of many emotions becomes a liberating experience.**

IT IS AN APPROACH ANCHORED IN THE BODY THAT MAKES THE MOST OF CREATIVITY AND SPONTANEITY.



Jacob Levy Moreno, Austrian physician and founder of psychodrama, conceptualized spontaneity and anxiety as inversely proportional, i.e. **the more anxiety one experiences, the less spontaneous one is**, and vice versa, **the increase in spontaneity decreases anxiety**. This is a principle that I bring to my drama therapy practice by encouraging participants to embrace their spontaneity no matter what comes up; **it is a playful and non-judgmental space**.

The exploration in drama therapy can be done through the different roles we take, for example, mother, father, child, caregiver, partner, brother, sister; how they interact with each other within us, which roles are more or less developed than others and in which roles we feel more comfortable.

Drama therapy allows us to **externalize the ambivalences that inhabit us, the discourses, the different parts of ourselves**. Once externalized, it favours the integration of new awarenesses, new ways of doing or seeing certain issues. This is done **through an experiential and playful approach through body sculptures, acting, improvisations, role-playing, and scene creation**. A typical session is **generally built in three distinct parts: the warm-up, the action and the closing ritual**.

Use this opportunity to come out of your shell, get to know yourself, express yourself, **and move towards more spontaneity!**


GO AHEAD! BE SPONTANEOUS!



EVERY GARDEN NEEDS A FENCE

HOPE JAIKARANSINGH

Every garden begins with a vision. Before even touching the soil, there could be a whole list of plants we wish to see flourish: herbs, veggies, flowers, berries, etc. Even so, what may begin as an intention of hope may lead to a sour harvest if we do not use a key strategy in maintaining a healthy garden long-term: **setting strong limits.**



Growing too many seeds at once is a recipe for an unmanageable garden. The idea of caregiver burnout is often related to an idea of limitlessness fueled by compassion. **Many caregivers often have a tendency and desire to go above and beyond for their loved ones.** All too common is the idea that if only we could manage x, y and z all at once, we would be able to cultivate an ideal environment to support our loved one's healing. Or the idea that being continually available for our loved ones - regardless of how empty our energy tank is - is how we are able to be the best parent, friend, child, sibling or person we can. We may find ourselves renouncing our own needs in order to make time for the additional obligations and responsibilities that come with caregiving.

These sacrifices we make are often associated with love. However, when our compassion for family and friends comes at the cost of our own self-care, sacrifice becomes **a disguise for self-neglect.**

You cannot possibly run at full capacity at all times - nor do you deserve to, and nor do you have to. **Establishing limits allows us to take care of ourselves,** even while committed to caring for others. **The more time and space we are able to preserve for ourselves, the more we will find ourselves able to face challenges and be there for others.** The impact of this intention of love towards yourself will inevitably affect those around you. Building a fence around your garden and creating strong boundaries can be a powerful tool to help reap you a bountiful harvest, season after season, in a way that is beneficial to both you and your loved one.

Voltaire said it right: you must cultivate your own garden



ANDREEA CALIAN

I read Voltaire's *Candide*; or, the Optimist during my high school years.

Eighteenth-century Europe's most famous novel ends on a tender note: after a long voyage filled with endless misfortunes and calamities, Candide reunites with his true love, settles on a farm just outside of Constantinople, and life goes on.

Voltaire attributes the most important line of the story to a nameless character, referred to as 'the Turk.' When asked what he knows about the death of a Mufti and two viziers, he responds: 'I don't know, [...] I have never known the name of any Mufti [interpreter of law], nor of any Vizier [prime minister]. [...] **I never bother with what is going on in Constantinople; I only worry about sending the fruits of the garden which I cultivate off to be sold there.**'

Candide will then say: 'this honest Turk [...] seems to be in a far better place than kings... I also know [...] **that we must cultivate our own garden.**'

What does this mean, exactly?

A possible interpretation of this text is that it is important to keep the focus on what is within a person's control, in their immediate environment. Focusing too much on others and comparing oneself can lead to unhappiness.

Instead of dwelling on others and on larger issues outside of one's control, try to think instead about our own goals, our garden.

What are the benefits?

Cultivating our garden translates to shaping our environment. As difficult as it is, it is important to work towards accepting that which we cannot change and instead turning our attention to what we can change.

The world can be a stressful place, and it's normal to feel overwhelmed. Life begins to look brighter when you look out for yourself, your family and your garden.



The Tree of Values

SAMANTHA DOBBIN

In art therapy, the symbolism of the tree can be used to represent oneself. In this article, I'd like to suggest an artistic activity you can carry out at home, which could help you deepen your knowledge of yourself, and perhaps inspire you to make choices, decisions or actions that will bring you closer to your values and what's important to you!

I suggest you create a tree using the creative medium of your choice: drawing, collage, painting, modeling (e.g. clay, model magic, plasticine), etc. Then observe your tree in relation to the following elements and see if you'd like to add or modify anything.

- The **trunk** could represent your strengths, support, inner or outer resources,
- the **roots** your beliefs, values, etc,
- the **branches** your important relationships,
- the **leaves, fruits, flowers or buds** could represent your hopes, visions, dreams or goals.

This activity can help you reconnect with what's important to you, all while taking time for yourself, making art and being in the present moment. This makes it a great yet simple exercise that is conducive to your well-being! Hope you enjoy it!

what's hot this summer!

Recharge your batteries with sunshine, salty sea air, culture, dance, exercise, relaxing kayaking, and fresh vegetables from the summer market. ALL IN THE REGION!

BEACONSFIELD GARDEN CLUB

To learn more

beaconsfieldgardenclub.ca/

COMMUNITY GARDENS OF MONTREAL

To learn more

<https://montreal.ca/en/how-to/get-plot-community-garden>

FREE AQUATIC RECREATIONAL AREAS

To learn more

westislandmommies.com/2022-splash-pads/

CAP SAINT-JACQUES BEACH

To learn more

<https://montreal.ca/en/places/parc-nature-du-cap-saint-jacques-beach>

BIKE RIDE ON THE ST. LAWRENCE RIVER PIER

To learn more

<https://jacquescartierchamplain.ca/en/active-mobility/bicycle-path-on-the-estacade/>

THE LITTLE MARKETS OF LACHINE

To learn more

<https://pic.centraide.org/en/lachine/hines-ptits-marches/>

CANOEING AND SAND UP PADDLE ON THE ST. LAURENT

To learn more

<https://www.pointe-claire.ca/en/canoe-club/>

OUTDOOR GYM AND DANCE AT PARC DES RAPIDES

To learn more

<https://montreal.ca/en/places/parc-des-rapides>

We wish you a wonderful summer!

D O N ' T M I S S O U T !

Need to relax?



Friends is thinking about your relaxation at home
bien-être, sérénité and réconfort
there where you need it.

ON SALE ON-SITE

Friends for Mental Health

Strengthening families, supporting caregivers

Services are confidential

Professional, personalized and quality services to support you!

Counselling

We offer families and friends personalized and confidential psychosocial counselling to better manage the challenges of their loved one's mental issues.

Support groups

In order to share coping strategies, feel more confident, and develop a sense of belonging, we offer several support groups facilitated by a counsellor.

Education programs

Psycho-educational classes are offered to individuals who have a loved one with a mental health issue to help them develop new strategies.

Activities

Webinars, conferences, art therapy, mindfulness activities, and more!



Helping people who have a loved one living with a mental health issue

Youth Program

- Services to children and youth aged 7 to 25 in the form of psychosocial counselling and art therapy.
- School-based mental health awareness program for youth.

Cultural Community Program

- Psychosocial services adapted to families from cultural communities.
- Awareness-raising presentations to destigmatize mental health issues.

Our counsellors are here to help you. Contact us to benefit from our services.

514-636-6885
info@asmfmh.org

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