

Summer + Growth = Good

Crossing Point Arts is extremely happy to announce that we are growing...and in many directions, at the same time!

As an organization we have the good fortune to welcome our new Board Chair: [Alen Amini](#). A special individual with high qualifications, Alen has graced our efforts with his big heart, his energy as a fighter for social justice, and his sizable experience in the nonprofit and business worlds.

As Alen helps us bring his innovative ideas to fruition, we are sure to be making giant steps forward. Stay tuned!!



Social Enterprise

Social Enterprise is a new part of our offerings, which gives a handful of our most motivated visual arts workshop participants to take part in a program to create items to sell.

Hand-made and hand-painted fashion accessories will soon be available for sale on our website, made by survivors!



Participants in this program are learning related business knowhow, gaining important skills to start their own small enterprise. Special thanks to *Entergy Fdn.*

Save The Date!!!

for our Fall Fundraiser ~

A Soulful Evening of Music, Art and Dance for Social Justice

With Special Honorees ~
[Morley & Belinda Becker](#)

To receive our:

Arts and Social Justice Awards 2019

Thurs. November 7, 2019
7pm - 9:30pm NYC
(details to follow soon!)



Exploring the Healing Power of the Arts

Anne Pollack, (Founder/Exec.Dir of CP Arts) sat down with a Neuroscientist, and a Psychoanalyst to explore the question of why the arts work to untie to knots of trauma and bring about healing.

Sharing some of the fascinating insights offered by these two - both supporters of our initiative - a bright light is beaming upon the importance of providing arts to survivors.

Crossing Point Arts began in 2013 and has reached approximately 3750 survivors of labor and sex trafficking. The vast variety



Dorothy L. Gloster, CPsychA;
Mayank Kumar, PhD



of survivors' experiences - combined with the great number of expressive modes that are offered in our workshops - would lead one to

believe that we would struggle to connect the dots. However, the opposite has been the case. It seems not to matter if we offer dance, poetry or painting, drama or singing...the success rate is consistently high.

Digging in deep with these two experts, I received responses that brought great clarity, as they weighed in on the mysterious and the healing power of the arts.

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Anne: "What is it about the arts that can reach survivors so rapidly, and bring about such transformation?"

Mayank: "It comes from within. With art, Dopamines are released into the brain, which have an addictive effect, and can be a healthy addiction, as it causes the release of dopamine, resulting in feelings of pleasure and accomplishment.

The positive reward center of the brain is based on Dopamine, and it makes you feel good. The negative reward center causes inhibition of Dopamine as well as the release of stress hormones leading to anxiety and fear.

So if someone is encouraging toward you, you have that surge of Dopamine to try again, and you become more resilient. But if there is someone is breaking you down or there is trauma, that is how the view of the individual changes. The effects of emotional or psychological abuse are damaging.

Dorothy: "We don't know the effect of the messaging, the lack of exposure to early enrichment and trauma. Yet, when that gets sorted through [...with encouragement and support], then you can see 'who' you are really dealing with."

Mayank: "The encouragement that people receive about their creative work does help in that dopamine rush."

Dorothy: "I think the creative process, by definition, addresses things that people didn't know they had inside of them. I think it provides a safe access to the unconscious. If it is stuck in the unconscious, the psyche has decided it is just too dangerous, too risky to experience consciously. So it is buried somewhere. But in the creative process, we are not entirely in control of where that access happens, and then what the product is. Quite often we are accessing something we are not even aware of.

I think things happen in stages, as one feels the safety and the comfort of going beyond the known and the usual."

Mayank: "We assume we are rational beings. But really we are emotional beings that are trying to be rational. The negative feelings are given a safe outlet by the creative process which helps in the healing process.

Anne: "Is the healing a sort of re-scripting...offering a new idea of oneself? Is it new input that brings the healing?"

Dorothy: "It is said that an author is always writing the same book, and a painter is always creating the same painting... because there is some unresolved emotional conflict they are trying to work through, and resolve, in their work. Part of that is not conscious, and not known in the moment."

Mayank: "If you have things that you haven't processed, those feelings [in your workshops] finally have an outlet in the creative process. So it is like a pressure cooker letting off steam. You may get to a point where the survivor can feel safe to deal with the trauma due to the venting of negative feelings. This helps in acceptance, healing and moving on to [hopefully] enjoying life. You realize you are safe, because you have moved on...and you can consider other

possibilities. Otherwise, if there is no outlet, the person will at some point explode."

Anne: "In Crossing Point Arts workshops there is the creative release, and then there is acknowledgement by the Teaching Artist. Is this part of the process of the beneficial neurotransmitters being released?"

Mayank: "The dopamine hit is followed by a longer-lasting feeling of happiness because of the endorphins...the 'feel-good-hormones,' so to speak. What we believe is that dopamine releases cause a feeling of reward and then the endorphin release makes you feel happy. And the rest of the neurons feel happy, because of the endorphins."

Dorothy: "I think it is a process that you have to be extremely patient with. The psyche and the character are formulated over thousands and thousands of experiences. They don't change that quickly. It is a long term process...so it is the cumulative experience that transforms the individual."

Mayank: "You have told me that you have a lot people who keep coming back to your workshops, repeatedly. Look at it this way: these are people who have been trafficked. They have been literally betrayed at the core level.

For them to form that kind of trust with the Teaching Artist, that is a huge healing process. That they keep coming back, that is a huge, huge, huge gain.

Imagine someone who was trafficked by their relative, that is an immense break. If they don't take the step toward healing, the person remains isolated. If the person remains isolated, they are never going to heal."

Anne: "It is understood now that trauma lives in the body. I tell the Teaching Artists, when I train them: 'trauma didn't enter the body through words, and generally, it cannot leave the body with only the use of words.' Do you think it is important for a survivor to have a witness of their creative experience of releasing trauma?"

Mayank: "The individual's need for validation is important. That increases the happiness quotient. If you are are isolated, you cannot share your happiness, and you cannot share your sorrow."

Dorothy: "The important thing is not to get in the way of the healing process. People vote with their feet. When they enter the room to show up, their presence is the most important part of the process. They are coming back. They are trusting. That speaks volumes."

Mayank: "There is always going to be a ripple effect. It will extend. Those who you help will tell others...and help others."

Anne: "So, you both have made me understand, the healing is the entire process, for survivors. The creative work, the safe space we've created. And the chance to create from a place of trust."



*As always, we could not do this
without your help! Please join us in bringing the deep
nourishment of the arts into the lives of survivors of*

human trafficking. Please Donate.