



# CREATIVE EXPRESSION GROUPS

**ARTISTS LOFT**

**WARM HEARTS,  
WARM BODIES**

Creative expression programs in a mental health peer support setting provide a safe and supportive space for individuals to explore and share their thoughts and emotions through art, writing, music, or other creative outlets. These programs can help participants process experiences, reduce stress, and build self-awareness in ways that don't rely on words alone. Engaging in creativity alongside peers fosters connection, confidence, and a sense of accomplishment, while supporting healing and overall well-being.

# ARTIST LOFT

## Vision Statement

To create a compassionate, inclusive, and culturally respectful space where participants can safely share, listen, and support one another on their paths toward healing, resilience, and growth.

## Purpose of the Group

The Artist Loft (AL) groups provide a safe, peer-facilitated environment to explore art as a wellness tool. Through mindful, process-based activities, guided prompts, and gentle discussion, participants build creative confidence, emotional awareness, and a sense of belonging - without pressure for artistic perfection.

## Program Objectives

- Increase emotional wellness through mindful, process-focused art activities.
- Build creative confidence and foundational skills across varied media.
- Foster belonging and inclusion via collaborative, peer-supported art-making.
- Strengthen resilience, problem-solving, and self-expression through exploration.
- Encourage curiosity, playfulness, and self-compassion in the creative process.

## Artist Loft Program Procedure

1. **Welcome (5-10 min):** Facilitator welcomes participants and reviews the Comfort Agreement.
2. **Overview & demo (10 min):** The facilitator will introduce the topic and explore the link to wellness and show a simple example.
3. **Guided activity (30-40 min):** Either a step-by-step tutorial or open exploration.
4. **Reflection/Share (10-15 min):** Brief share or a journaling.
5. **Close (5-10 min):** One gratitude, one self-care action, and tidying the space.

## Open Group Policy

The Artist Loft is an open group, meaning:

- New participants are welcome at any time.
- No prior attendance is required.
- Individuals may join as often as they find it helpful.

## Session Overview

- **Format:** In person at NISA.
- **Open group:** New participants may join at any time.
- **Attendance:** Join as often or as little as is helpful.
- **Eligibility:** Anyone registered with NISA may sign-up for this group.

# WARM HEARTS, WARM BODIES

## Vision Statement

To create a welcoming, self-guided space where individuals can explore quilting and sewing at their own pace, fostering creativity, connection, and a sense of accomplishment while building skills and supporting well-being.

## Purpose of the Group

The purpose of this group is to provide a supportive, self-directed environment where participants can engage in quilting and sewing as a way to build skills, express creativity, and connect with others, while promoting relaxation, confidence, and overall well-being.

## Program Objectives

- Create a supportive, self-guided space for participants to explore quilting and sewing at their own pace
- Build practical skills and confidence in sewing, design, and project completion
- Encourage creativity, self-expression, and mindfulness through hands-on activities
- Foster social connection and peer support within a welcoming group environment
- Promote a sense of purpose and accomplishment through meaningful projects
- Design and complete quilts or other sewing projects to keep or to donate to individuals in need within the community.

## Warm Hearts, Warm Bodies Program Procedure

1. **Welcome (5-10 min):** Facilitator welcomes participants and reviews the Comfort Agreement.
2. **Quilting (1 hr 50 min):** Participants are welcome to drop in any time during the group schedule to work on their sewing projects.

## Open Group Policy

Warm Hearts, Warm Bodies is an open group, meaning:

- New participants are welcome at any time.
- No prior attendance is required.
- Individuals may join as often as they find it helpful.

## Session Overview

- **Format:** In person at NISA.
- **Open group:** New participants may join at any time.
- **Attendance:** Join as often or as little as is helpful.
- **Eligibility:** Anyone registered with NISA may sign-up for this group.