

COLLEGE AVENUE

The Health and Wellness Edition

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A Rocky Mountain Student Media Publication

Golden Poppy

Feature on The Golden Poppy
Herbal Apothecary

Puff Puff? Pass:

How Medical Marijuana
Helps Users Cope with
Chronic Pain

Yoga Pod

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Editors

Kailey Pickering, Editor-in-Chief
Avery Coates, Multimedia Editor
Sasha Beran-Hughes, Visual Editor

Copy Editors

Holly Middleton
Annie Weiler

Contributors

Grant Coursey
Hania Nini
Cassidy DuFore Payne
Macy Taylor
Sterling Volz

Photography

Lucy Morantz
Avery Coates
Grant Coursey
Sterling Volz
Michael Marquardt
Sara Shaver
Sophia Stern

Design

Sasha Beran-Hughes
Kaylee Congdon
Tessa Glowacki
Charly Frank

Social Media

Sterling Volz

Advisor *(the man who made this possible)*

Jake Sherlock



@collegeavemag
collegeavemag.com

College Avenue Magazine

CSU Lory Student Center, Room 118
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(970) 938-1184
collegeavemag.com
editor@collegeavemag.com

Advertising Inquiries

advertising@collegian.com

Employment Opportunities

editor@collegeavemag.com



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From Your Editors

While it may be hard to tell with Colorado's mix of sunshine and snow storms, spring has finally arrived in Fort Collins. The welcomed sunshine brings new adventures as lawns begin to green and trees begin to bloom, whether it be hikes to Horsetooth, picnics in City Park, or outside concerts.

Among spring's many opportunities, prioritizing one's health and wellness is an important one. Spring is a great time to check in with oneself after the long winter months. Whether it means venturing to a yoga studio, talking a walk through nature, visiting Fort Collins' local apothecary, experiencing mental health benefits through art, or exploring the benefits of medical marijuana, each individual's health journey is unique. In this edition, we strived to find a variety of health and wellness opportunities in Fort Collins and deliver them to you. We hope that after diving into this edition, you feel equipped with stories to embark on your own spring health journey.

Avery Coates
Multimedia Editor

Alexandra (Sasha)
Beran-Hughes
Visual Editor

Kailey Pickering
Editor-in-Chief

Cover Photo by Sara Shaver

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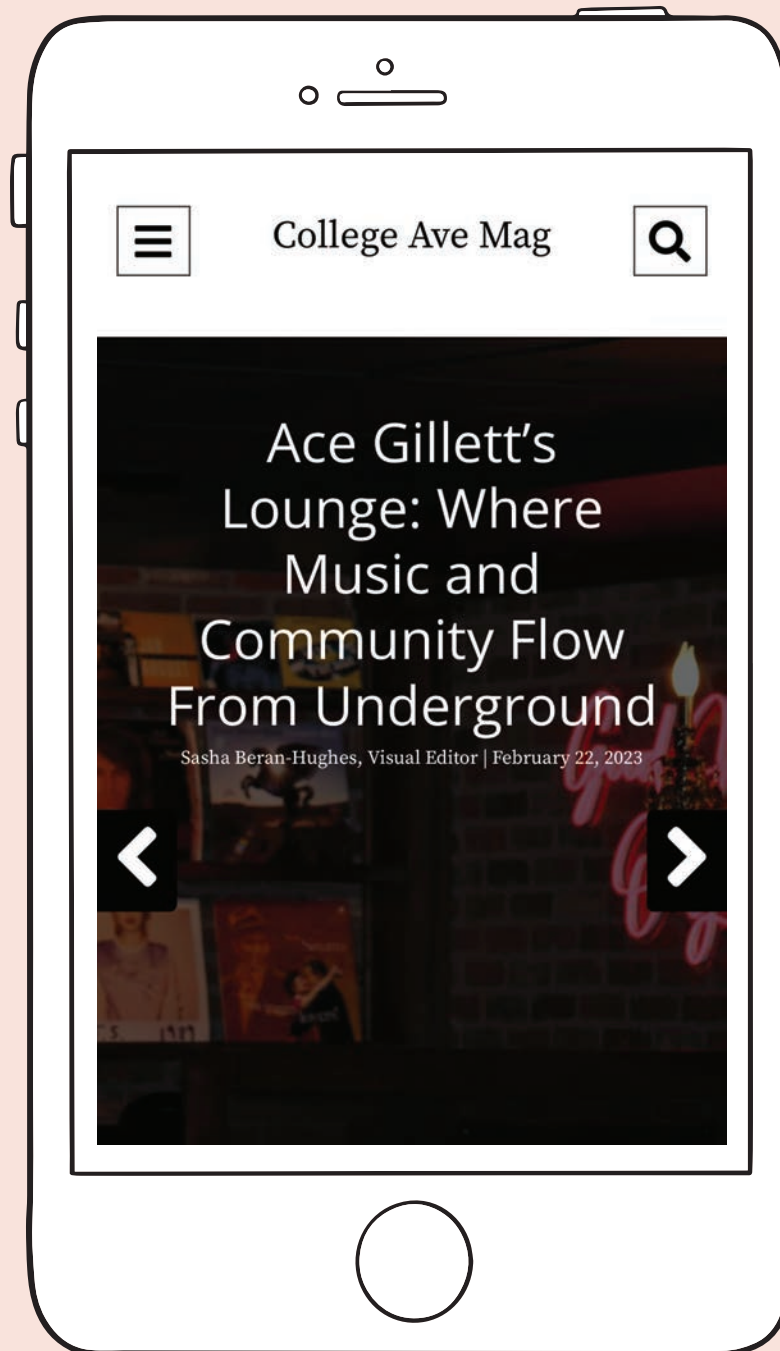
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By Macy Taylor

Photos by Sara Shaver

"Oh my gosh, it smells so good," is everyone's first reaction after entering the Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary, taking in the store's earthy florals, tall ceilings, grand windows, and rock wall. Full of herbs, teas, tinctures, elixirs, skin and body care, and essential oils, the apothecary has a multifaceted purpose, between providing customers with natural healing remedies, access to bulk herbs, and ways to connect with nature. In 2012, Sarah Josey opened the first Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary inside of a yoga studio. Soon, she opened the location in Fort Collins on College Avenue. Her store not only offers aromatherapy, herbs, face and body care but also workshops and events to learn how to use the products sold.

With a few more steps into the store, the customer is welcomed by skincare and body products. If they follow those steps up, they

see the wall of herbs and freshly jarred teas, but it doesn't end there. To the left, one can walk through two wooden sliding doors into the library, a room stacked with shelves of books and other wellness products.

Josey attended Colorado State University in 2006 and then moved to study herbology in 2009 at the North American Institute of Clinical Herbalism (now called the Colorado School of Clinical Herbalism) in Lafayette, Colorado. While learning about herbs and essential oils, she noticed that there was nowhere to explore herbs in Fort Collins.

"I moved back to Fort Collins and just got started working on it because I knew I wanted to have a place for people to buy bulk herbs, and there wasn't one," Josey says. As her store began to grow, Josey sought out to expand her vision and application of herbs, wanting

(Background) Loose leaf tea sits on display in Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary March 26. Customers can purchase premade blends as seen in their Old Town store, or can schedule personal consultations with Golden Poppy staff members to get a customized blend that addresses individualized needs.

to provide people with medicinal herbs, nutrition advice, and aromatherapy.

From that idea, she opened the Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary, staffing it with herbalists, nutritionists, and even an aromatherapist. The herbalists study the medicinal and therapeutic usage of plants, and the nutritionists help guide people on nutrition issues and healthy eating. To promote their values of sustainability, organic products, and health, Josey ensures that everything is organic and as nontoxic as possible.

"We make everything ourselves in small batches, so it's all really fresh," Josey says. "Because we are all herbalists, we also do custom formulations and one-on-one consultations for people."

This makes it easy for people with complicated health issues, because the staff can individualize their herbal regime based on their health history and concerns.

Operating without much advertising or marketing, the apothecary is the type of store that people seek out because they are interested in its specific products. Due to Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary's strong website, they are easy to find online. Their limited marketing



Illustrations by
Sasha Beran-Hughes

(Left) Malia Eli leads a discussion in Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary's spring equinox womyn's circle hosted in Old Town March 22.

(Bottom) Many of Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary's products made in-store, including tinctures and elixirs blended by the apothecary staff, sit on display near the entrance of their Old Town store March 26.



doesn't stop Josey from knowing that the apothecary provides products that the people of Fort Collins want. "People just ended up finding us because they were looking for what we had to offer," Josey says.

The apothecary likes to spread the knowledge of using herbs as medicine through tea making, medicine making, mushroom foraging, and many other different types of classes. Josey co-leads a quarterly equinox circle, where people gather, sit in a circle, and simply talk. These equinox circles help people get more in touch with the seasons to come and get back in touch with the cyclical rhythms that happen in the natural world. Josey believes this is important because she believes that humans are disconnected from the cyclical rhythms of the earth nowadays. Every circle has a theme that relates to the season, and then it is an open circle where everyone is allowed to talk about whatever they need to.

"Whatever's on their hearts, whatever's coming up for them," Josey says. "Good, bad, exciting. Whatever it is, it's just a safe container for people... It's something I think not everybody has in their life, and a space where they can talk about things with people who don't have any say in their life."

After the circle is over, participants usually close with a craft or activity. This year's spring equinox circle will be closed with seed planting, or "dream seeds," so the participants can plant their dreams for this new year. These dreams have no limits so the participants are able to plant any dream they want whether it be financial, professional, academic, or anything personal.

Brita LaTona is a certified clinical herbalist who works at the clinic. LaTona also attended the North American Institute of Clinical Herbalism. She does a lot of nature-based connection work along with plant medicine. Her specialties are workshops and classes on herbs for sleep and dreaming, detoxification herbs, herbs for stress relief and relaxation, and medicinal mushrooms.

"This field is my heart and soul, so I really love working in holistic health where you just see results and peoples healing journeys, and it's really inspirational," LaTona says.

Working at Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary has influenced LaTona's own health by introducing her to more resources and knowledge.

"I aim to practice what I preach, so if I am telling people to do these certain things, I try my best to also be doing those," LaTona says.

Since spring and summer are coming up, the Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary will be doing a lot of botany and plant walking classes, which are usually very popular. These classes take people outside in search of the natural medicine found in the Fort Collins area and teach you how to use those plants. They will also have their more specific health classes for things like herbs for sleep, herbs for stress, and spring tonics. Customers can find the information for these classes on their website, goldenpoppyherbs.com, underneath "workshops and events".

"We really strive to give people the knowledge that they need to kind of feel empowered to take care of themselves in a more natural way," Josey says.



(Top Right) Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary's shop in Old Town creates a bright, welcoming environment for customers to find carefully crafted self care and wellness products March 26.

(Bottom Right) Women gather in Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary's classroom space in Old Town for a womyn's circle to celebrate the spring equinox March 22. Workshops and classes to help people learn about herbalism and spirituality are some of the many offerings that Golden Poppy Herbal Apothecary has to promote wellness in their community.





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by Nicole Atilas

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**WOMEN AND GENDER
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By Sterling Volz

The bright atmosphere and engaging instructors bring inspiration and comforting energy to Yoga Pod. Instructors pass kind words and encouragement to those practicing in the sunlight rooms, which are filled from wall to wall with people of all backgrounds, skill levels, and ages. Yoga Pod thrives on five core aphorisms displayed upon entry: “breathe first, cultivate discipline, create community, honor nature, and do the right thing.”

Located on 3300 S. College Ave in Fort Collins, Yoga Pod is a yoga franchise with origins in Gainesville, Florida. With over 10 locations nationwide and five in Colorado, Yoga Pod provides classes suited to everyone. From a more relaxing and light movement class such as zen, to classes that really get participants moving like podfit, everyone can find their place at Yoga Pod.

Upon entrance, attendees are greeted by smiling faces which welcome and produce

a sense of trust. Newcomers are shown the ropes, given a full tour, shown where the equipment is, asked questions, and are thoroughly knowledgeable of everything they need by the start of the session. Yoga Pod uses many different accessories in their classes and ensures that participants know that while they do not have to step out of their comfort zones, they are encouraged to go to the next step if possible. Beginner, intermediate and advanced positions are shown to those practicing with varying levels of expertise.

The current studio manager, Jana Stratton, provides insight into life as not only a manager but also an instructor. With 12 years of yoga practice under her belt, she recognizes it is important to remember that everyone starts somewhere for many different reasons. “Anyone who starts yoga for physical reasons starts to experience so many other benefits immediately,” Stratton says. “Whether they set out for mental health or emotional health, or not, those benefits sneak their way in regardless.”

(Next page) Yoga Pod Fort Collins provides engaging instructors, and a comforting energy to the people of all backgrounds who come together there March 27. (Sterling Volz | College Avenue Magazine)

Yoga increases flexibility and strength while also targeting balance. Different yoga disciplines can progress toward different goals. At Yoga Pod, the selection of classes ranges from soothing injury to focusing on cardio as well. To cultivate different atmospheres, the music selection in each class ranges. Some have more intense soundtracks while others have subtle, calm music to ease the mind.

The health benefits that come from yoga are helpful for everyday life, but so is having a supportive community. The Yoga Pod community consists of like-minded individuals that both practice together and share life's excitement.

"Yoga Pod keeps people coming back because everyone feels safe and welcome there," Stratton says. "It's because when they walk in, someone knows their name."

The community that Yoga Pod has to offer is attributed to knowing not only the instructors but fellow attendees as well. Relationships are formed through a class where individuals are able to share a common interest and continue to grow through everyday life.

Newer attendees at Yoga Pod are welcomed with open arms by recurring members; to talk with before class starts, help with equipment, and are shown where the best spot to put their mat is. The cultivated members are eager to talk with

the new faces of the class, showing a sense of pride for the community that Yoga Pod is.

"It's so neat to see the relationships come together," Stratton says. "Before you know it, we see them on social media having dinner with other students, which is so fun... at Yoga Pod, the community is at the heart of everything we do... I truly believe that having a community is the essence of living a joyful and healthy life."

As one of Yoga Pod's core values is the community, it does not go without notice that the instructors take this seriously and want to welcome not only those practicing but their lives as well. Those practicing feel more confident going into a studio where they are allowed to bring every part of themselves, good and bad.

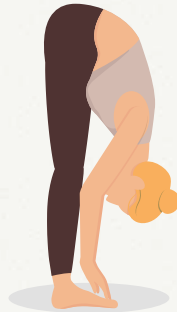
"We have community potlucks, and happy hours, and just so many different ways to get people together outside of the studio," Stratton says.

Yoga Pod has so many beneficial class opportunities as well as free classes on the east lawn next to their studio all summer long. Yoga Pod also offers an internship position for those seeking classes in exchange for a few hours of help a week around their studio. Information about the outdoor classes will be posted on their social media accounts at [@yogapodfortcollins](#).





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How Medical Marijuana Helps Users Cope with Chronic Pain

By: Cassidy DuFore Payne

Sluggish, unmotivated, fatigued, foggy-brained. These are all words that have been used to describe people who smoke marijuana. However, for Jackie Neil, a 4th year at Colorado State University, these are all symptoms of her chronic illness, fibromyalgia.

According to the National Institutes of Health, fibromyalgia is a long-lasting medical disorder that causes “pain and tenderness throughout the body as well as fatigue and trouble sleeping.”

Prior to college, Neil had been an active martial artist for the better part of a decade; however, the aftermath of the strenuous activity combined with her severe symptoms eventually became intolerable. Her condition caused fatigue, leading her to nap often. This, along with the severe pain, negatively affected her day-to-day schedule as debilitating symptoms forced her to skip classes and not perform her best at work.

Not having the energy to get through each class and workday took its toll on Neil’s mental health. “It felt like I was trapped in my own body,” she says.

Neil is pursuing a degree in nutrition and food science with a second major in psychology. While she’s passionate about her studies, her symptoms were disrupting her progress in obtaining her degree.

“I skipped some classes during that last semester because of doctor’s appointments or just not feeling good,” Neil says. “So it was pretty detrimental to myself and my well-being because I like to be productive, I like to get work done.”

Frustrated with the lack of effect from common painkillers such as Advil and Tylenol and struggling with the reality of falling behind in class, Neil decided she needed to make a change.

She began experimenting with CBD, which helped with the baseline of her pain; however, it still persisted. After thinking of a high school friend who used medical marijuana to ease the pain of a pinched nerve in his neck, Neil decided to give it a try.

Now, about two years later, she still finds it an invaluable part of coping with her chronic pain.



Illustrations by Charly Frank

(Previous) Marijuana plants grow in the Hummingbird Cannabis facility in Lafayette, Colo. April 20, 2022. (Lucy Morantz | College Avenue Magazine)

(Left top) Marijuana plants grow in the Hummingbird Cannabis facility in Lafayette, Colo. April 20, 2022. (Lucy Morantz | College Avenue Magazine)

(Left bottom) Marijuana plants grow in the Hummingbird Cannabis facility in Lafayette, Colo. April 20, 2022. (Lucy Morantz | College Avenue Magazine)



"Marijuana, massages, and yoga," Jackie Neil says. "Those are my three things I live and breathe by when it comes to chronic pain."

Although it's an integral part of her regime, medical marijuana is not Neil's only way to combat her symptoms. "Marijuana, massages, and yoga," she says. "Those are my three things I live and breathe by when it comes to chronic pain."

Neil also uses a prescribed medication called amitriptyline that helps treat nerve pain, a symptom of fibromyalgia according to the London Pain Clinic.

Throughout Neil's fibromyalgia journey, she has also had to deal with the stigma and stereotypes associated with the substance. Medical professionals are less inclined to prescribe her alternative medications due to her use of marijuana.

According to Neil, these medical professionals can get the notion of substance dependency, and don't treat it like they would other pain medications.

"It's kind of like an Advil, in my opinion," she says.

She said she believes that medical marijuana is like other prescription medications, in the sense that it's not going to be the solution for everyone.

"I'm not saying that everyone should, you know, blaze up," Neil says. "Just understanding that, hey, some medications work for you, and some medications don't work for me, but this works for me. It might not work for you."

Neil credits this treatment for helping her attend this semester at school without accommodations. Before, she wasn't attending school due to her severe pain, but now she has the assistance she needs to focus on acquiring her college degree.

While the substance provides her with relief, she also recognizes the importance of not using it at inappropriate times. Neil does not use it with the intention of getting high, but simply to relieve her pain, and she is not alone in that method.

Lily Findling, who asked to remain anonymous with an alias, is diagnosed with anxiety, depression, complex PTSD, chronic pain in her joints, and ADHD. She finds CBD and marijuana to be helpful tools to cope with these conditions, in addition to her prescribed medication.

Findling uses gummies with two CBD parts to one THC part (also known as two-to-one edibles) about twice a week. She says the CBD helps with her anxiety and chronic pain

while the THC helps her cope with some of her ADHD symptoms, among other things.

"When I take the two-to-one edibles, it's kind of like I can feel more of a mind-body connection because I'm not as anxious and intrusive thoughts aren't as common for me when I take them," Findling says.

In addition to the gummies, she uses a CBD tincture, which is an alcohol-based extract, to help her nerve pain.

"I have Ehler-Danlos syndrome, which is a weird joint condition where my connective tissue is like, too loose," she says. "So my joints kind of partially dislocate all the time. So it can be really painful."

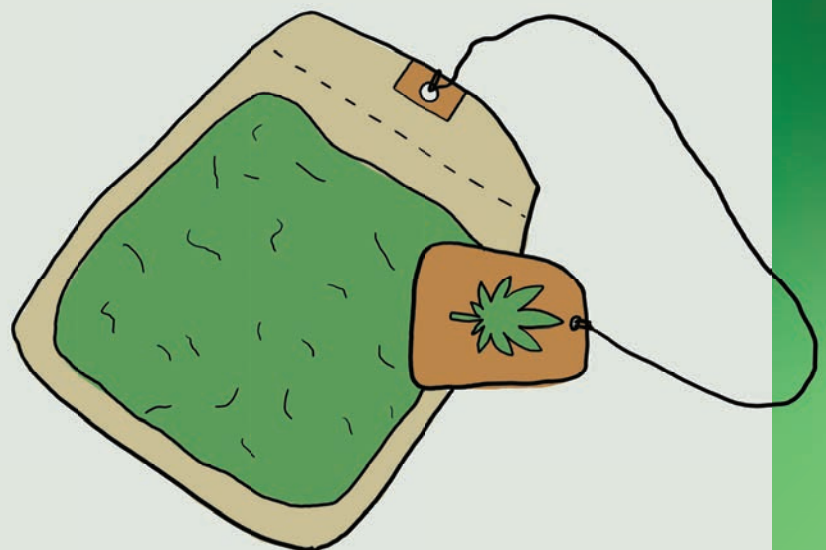
CBD and THC help combat her other symptoms as well.

According to Findling, ADHD makes it difficult for neurons to respond to dopamine. "That results in not being able to concentrate on anything that doesn't interest me," she says. "The right amount of THC makes everything interesting so that it doesn't matter. I can just pay attention to whatever is in front of me and I'm more present."

Like Neil, Findling recognizes that marijuana helps her, but it can be harmful when misused, just like other prescription drugs. She has friends who struggle with dependency on the substance and encourages others to know themselves and their limits before trying it.

(Next page left)
Marijuana plants hang
in a drying room at the
Hummingbird Cannabis
growhouse in Lafayette,
Colo. April 20, 2022.
(Lucy Morantz | College
Avenue Magazine)

(Next page right)
Jackie Neil poses
for a portrait April 3.
(Avery Coates | College
Avenue Magazine)





All prescription medications can be dangerous if not used in the way they were intended. Those who are looking to try marijuana for applicable symptoms are strongly encouraged to consult a medical professional and start with small doses.

Medical marijuana is taking flight as a viable treatment option for a multitude of different symptoms. Whether it's to help with seizures, weight loss, or several other medical conditions, patients swear by it to help them with an array of grievances.

"It was used hundreds of years ago as medicine, why can it not be used as medicine now?" Neil asks.



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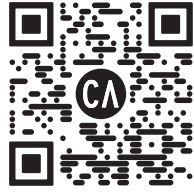
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Nature: Escaping the Noise of Our Lives

By Hania Nini

Photos by Sophia Stern

As our lives become more stressful with jobs, schoolwork, and duties at home, mental health care has become more important. Fortunately, research has shown that a simple solution to fighting stress is right outside our door: nature. Colorado's forests and gardens have a profound benefit on mental health, and there are various resources available to those seeking solace in nature. Colorado is an example of a state that has focused on the link between health and nature with its abundance of therapeutic forests and gardens.

Several studies have found that spending time in nature has a significant, positive effect on mental health. A 2010 study published in the Environmental Health and Preventive Medicine journal discovered that walking through forests reduces levels of cortisol—a stress hormone—as well as blood pressure and pulse rate. Similarly, a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences shows that exposure to green spaces has been linked to a lower risk of psychiatric disorders. Another study, by the University of California, Irvine, demonstrated that it could also reduce the risk of postpartum depression.

According to a 2022 article from The Colorado Sun, several Canadian mental health professionals now prescribe national park

“With origins in Japan in the 1980s, forest bathing is a form of preventive health care.”

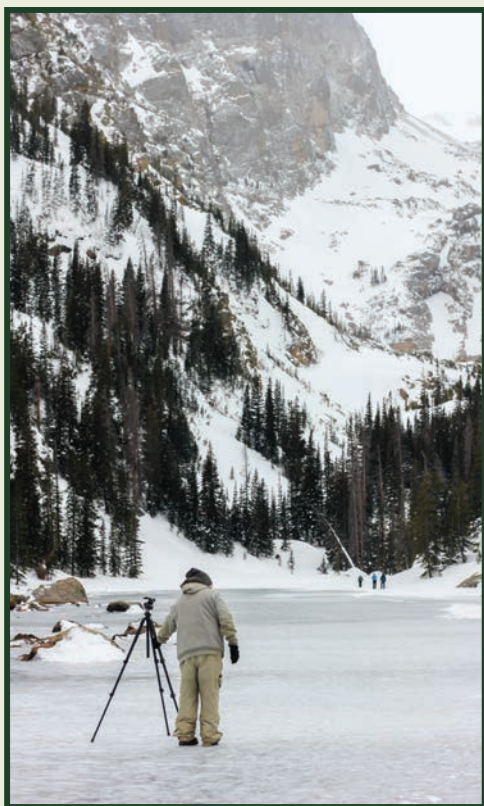
passes to patients suffering from depression, anxiety, or other mental health issues. These activities are not a complete cure to mental health issues, but they can be a valuable supplement to talk therapy or medication.

While spending time in nature may seem like a good idea intuitively, several studies have highlighted the benefits of “forest bathing,” or meditative walks through tree canopies. With origins in Japan in the 1980s, forest bathing is a form of preventive health care. As stated in an article from The Denver Post,

Illustrations by
Kaylee Congdon

(Bottom) Snow falls steadily, blanketing the landscape with fresh snow in Rocky Mountain National Park March 25. The average snowfall for Rocky Mountain National Parks in March is 4.7 inches, going up to 5.9 inches in April.





a traditional Chinese body movement system, usually practiced outdoors, is one of the activities available, which is taught by a local instructor and is appropriate for all levels.

As an alternative to traditional forms of therapy, therapeutic horticulture is a program that improves people's physical and mental well-being. The emphasis on gardening activities and the use of plants as therapeutic tools to achieve specific therapeutic goals distinguishes therapeutic horticulture. It frequently entails structured programming with tailored goals. Unlike other types of nature-based therapy, therapeutic horticulture takes a unique approach to using nature to boost physical, emotional, cognitive, and social well-being. It encourages participants to connect with nature by engaging their senses and practicing mindfulness. Participants in therapeutic horticulture have reported improved mood, reduced stress and anxiety, and a stronger sense of social connectedness, according to Denver Botanic Gardens. The program provides a variety of therapeutic horticulture programs for people of all abilities, and they can customize their resources to meet individual needs.

(Left) A photographer sets up his tripod in the center of Dream Lake on the Dream Lake Trail in Rocky Mountain National Park, March 25. Numerous photographers visit Rocky Mountain National Park year around to capture nature's beauty.

forest bathing, also known as shinrin-yoku in Japan, literally translates as "bringing in the forest." This activity is all about taking in our surroundings, including the sights, sounds, and smells of nature. Rather than focusing on getting somewhere, forest bathing is like a moving meditation, with the goal of remaining mindful among the trees. The practice encourages people to sit down and enjoy the sensory experience on a daily basis, even if it is just for 10 minutes by a tree.

According to an article from The Denver Post, forest bathing is a popular trend that is gaining traction in Colorado. There are several resources available to learn more about forest bathing. For example, the city of Boulder offers free, weekly nature walks to the public throughout the summer.

However, there are other ways to connect with nature, especially for people who don't live near forests. The Gardens on Spring Creek, a botanical garden in Fort Collins, has created the Gardens for All program to provide individuals and families in need with easier access to its facilities. The city and donors fund this program, which is based on community partnerships. While the program's goal is to make the gardens more accessible, their facilities serve a variety of functions other than therapy or mental health. The Gardens on Spring Creek also host a myriad of activities to get people outdoors. Tai Chi,



“Participants in therapeutic horticulture have reported improved mood, reduced stress and anxiety, and a stronger sense of social connectedness, according to Denver Botanical Gardens.”

The list goes on when it comes to community-based programs that can improve individuals' physical and mental well-being. A recent study from the University of Colorado Boulder discovered that community gardening can help prevent cancer, chronic diseases, and mental health disorders. This first-ever controlled trial of community gardening found that participants who began gardening ate more fiber and exercised more, both of which can lower the risk of chronic diseases. The study also discovered that gardening reduced participants' stress and anxiety levels. Gardening is transformational, even life-saving, for many people, according to Linda Appel

Lipsius, executive director of Denver Urban Gardens, a nonprofit that helps people grow their own food in community garden plots.

Spending time in nature can have significant mental health benefits. Exposure to nature can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression, as well as improve mood and cognitive function. Outdoor activities such as hiking, gardening, and forest bathing can be especially beneficial to one's mental health. Nevertheless, there are many other offerings. Programs such as therapeutic horticulture and community gardening can provide individuals with additional social and health benefits.

(Bottom) A Steller's Jay perches on a pine tree limb at Dream Lake Trail in Rocky Mountain National Park, March 25. The Steller's Jay is also known as the Long-crested Jay, Pine Jay, and Mountain Jay.





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METALSMITHING & MENTAL HEALTH:

THE **BENEFITS**
OF **ARTISTIC**
EXPRESSION



Through the eyes
of CSU Metalsmith Students

By: Grant Coursey

There is a public mythos built around the idea of the “tortured artist.” This idea expresses that truly great art goes hand in hand with emotional despair or personal distress.

While there are plenty of famous artists and creatives that adhere to this pattern, it may be that they are the exception, not the rule. Psychology Today, Forbes, Smithsonian Magazine, and many other publications have conducted studies and written articles on the beneficial effects of artistic expression in recent years.

These findings are no surprise to the students of Colorado State University’s metalsmithing program, who say art is the remedy for many of their internal struggles, as well as the key to continued mental health and stability in their lives.

These CSU art students creatively express themselves in a myriad of ways, but one core truth remains for all of them: art improves their mental well-being dramatically.

Syd Hanna is a fifth-year student at CSU who started college as an engineering major. Now he is studying metalsmithing and sculpture and is the secretary for the metalsmithing guild on campus. His journey as a transmasculine student has not been easy, Hanna says. Art has been one of, if not the key factor in his journey of self-exploration and expression.

For Hanna, artistic expression is a two-way street. It allows him to better express and work through internal thoughts and feelings he might be having a hard time expressing otherwise. At the same time, the act of creation helps him discover new things about himself.

“I have always struggled with anxiety and depression,” Hanna explains. “I think... creative expression really helps you get those feelings out that are sometimes hard to articulate.... ‘Cause (anxiety and depression) never go away. It’s something that you always have to think about and always have to deal with and I think that, for me at least, creative expression just really helps me be able to deal with it.”

The metalsmithing program at CSU has helped Hanna beyond just allowing him to hone and practice his art. Hanna largely credits this to the uplifting, supportive community in CSU’s art department.

“I think that’s why I love CSU’s art community so much,” Hanna explains. “It’s because I know that there are other places where it can be really competitive and it can be very much ‘who’s the best, who’s gonna get the best job, who’s gonna get into the best grad school, who’s gonna whatever,’ and at CSU I don’t feel that. I feel that everybody is trying to support each other.”

The community of CSU’s metalsmithing program helped him see the transition and improvement in his art as a source of confidence, not just in his art, but also in himself, Hanna says.

Joclyn Goss took a longer road to end up at CSU as a post-baccalaureate metalsmithing student. Goss had successful careers in graphics work and as an art therapist for underserved youth in Philadelphia. While pursuing her career Goss also focused on supporting her daughter’s dance career, which landed her daughter a full-ride scholarship to George Washington University, before she retired to come back to school for metalsmithing.

Goss’s background, both as a Black woman interested in the arts growing up in Connecticut in the 1960s and as an art therapist for the youth of underserved communities, has solidified her passion to provide access to the arts for youths of color.

“A lot has not been invested in teens of color and I have a responsibility to do that,” Goss says. “I can’t have all this and not be expected to share. My thing in life is to help people find their greatness and then move and grow into that.”

Goss says that too often, diverse perspectives are missing in the arts because there is little to no introduction or support for the arts as a viable and valuable career path in underserved communities of color. This is something she experienced growing up and is now determined to remedy for as many young people as she can in her retirement.

Goss says her goal is to open her own studio. She wants to own a place where teens can develop their creativity and foster their gifts, as well as learn how to become entrepreneurial, create their own business and sell their work.

“Just (giving teens the) understanding that you don’t have to do a nine-to-five,” Goss says.

Illustrations by
Tessa Glowacki

(Right) Joclyn Goss hammers a piece of metal at the Colorado State University Visual Arts Building March 23. (Grant Coursey | College Avenue Magazine)

(Bottom) Syd Hanna works in metalsmithing classroom at the Colorado State University Visual Arts Building March 23. (Grant Coursey | College Avenue Magazine)

(Below) Art pieces by Syd Hanna at the Colorado State University Visual Arts Building March 26. These pieces are part of the "Trash to Flash" series, making new jewelry from discarded old jewelry. (Michael Marquardt | College Avenue Magazine)





“[ART] SOOTHES YOUR SOUL,” JOCLYN GOSS SAYS. “I HAVEN’T MET ONE ARTIST WHO IS A WORKING ARTIST WHO CAN SAY ‘I’M DISSATISFIED WITH MYSELF.’”

“You can create an avenue where you bring in other people to do a nine-to-five for you. You have an avenue with your gifts and your talents to make a way for yourself.”

For Goss, art has always been the way to quiet her mind when her life has been full of tumultuous noise, a way to tap into something quiet and closed.

“(Art) soothes your soul,” Goss says. “I haven’t met one artist who is a working artist who can say ‘I’m dissatisfied with myself.’”

Kelsey Gruber, president of the Metalsmithing Guild of CSU, is in her capstone semester for metalsmithing and says she uses art to grapple with questions she has about the world. Her recent art specifically attempts to grapple with and normalize the idea of mortality.

Gruber is double majoring in sculpture and metalsmithing and says that the two disciplines help her in different ways.

“Doing metalsmithing, you are holding yourself accountable and you are dedicating yourself to a tradition and a craft in some way,” Gruber says. “Sculpture is a little different, I think. (In) the world of sculpture there are so many different subsets. There might even be sculptors that are metalsmiths... (Sculpture) can be made out of anything.”

In metalsmithing, Gruber says the medium grounds her when she needs it.

“When I first got into metals, the reason I loved it so much was because it was introducing a discipline – not just a discipline as in like a category, but a self-discipline in my life that I had lacked and it was doing it in a positive way,” Gruber says. “It was holding me accountable, holding me to my integrity to just spend time on things and plan things out in a way where I would want to see (them) through.... Metalsmithing is kind of spiritual. It’s really like you are interacting with the metal and you are speaking with the metal in a way.”

During the interview with Kelsey Gruber, a friend and fellow art student who is aspiring to become an art teacher, Abhi Joseph, came into the room to share with Gruber a piece he had been working on in the ceramics studio.

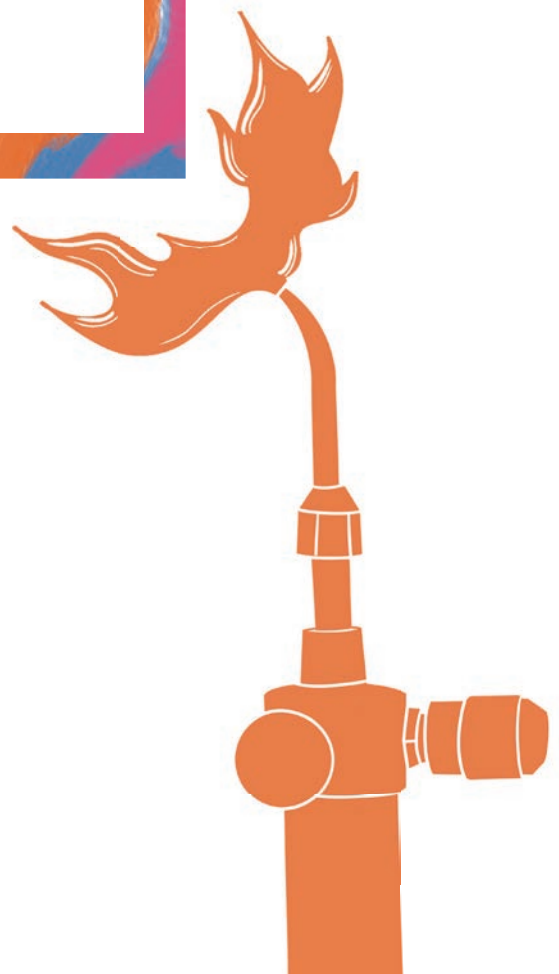
When Joseph heard the topic of artistic expression and mental wellness being discussed, he could barely contain his smile, eager to share how mentally and emotionally centering and powerful he found the rituals associated with different art forms.

It is likely every artist on campus has a different answer to the question “how does art help you?” Art is a tool that can be used in any way the artist feels drawn to. Whether it is a single medium approached in different ways, or entirely different mediums, CSU’s artists all find something emotionally powerful and fulfilling in their art.

Each of them get something slightly different out of their artistic expression, but all of it is equally impactful; a ringing endorsement to find that creative outlet in our own lives, and take advantage of the peace and healing it provides to so many.

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THAT ARE SOMETIMES
HARD TO
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-SYD HANNA





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