

# THE HEALING POWER OF THE ARTS

By Maria Scaros, Executive Director, The Greens at Greenwich

It is recorded that around 1030 B.C., the music of a shepherd boy named David, soothed the “savage breast” of King Saul. Music conjures images and memories like no other medium can. Dr. Oliver Sachs, a well-known neurologist, was fascinated by how music affected the cortical parts of our brain. Hearing a familiar tune brings us to a time and place vividly stored in our mind. Our first kiss. A special summer. Our wedding song. We do not remember in language. We remember in images awakened through art, music, dance and story.

Watching flamenco in Seville after a painful breakup, I felt the dancer’s passion as she stomped and filled the space with her gorgeous skirt and flowing scarf validating my hurt and my anger more than any words. She “spoke” for me. She knew me. She was me. I was healing through her dance. I was renewed. My anger lifted and I knew I was ready to move on.

As a Drama Therapist I see life as an epic, a play. Each act furthers the story. I see myself being in Act Three, just where the story resolves many of its complications. It’s juicy and exciting. I like referring to it as “Passion, Risk and Adventure,” as Dr. Sara Lawrence Lightfoot, a celebrated sociologist

refers to it. At almost 70 years old I look forward to more passion, risk and adventure.

Everyone’s story matters. The telling of it and the hearing it validates us. Our stories define us. We are all “players,” as Shakespeare reminded us. “All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players; ... and one man in his time plays many parts...” When we enter a theater, we “suspend our disbelief” and enter the world of the players. We sympathize. We empathize and we are seeing our own stories in bits and pieces, reflecting on them and are renewed.

Whether we experience the arts passively or actively, we are soothing our soul. Never forget that music, art, dancing and storytelling are universal healing salves for all of us. They help us travel through time and confirm our place in the present. Be sure to listen, look and feel carefully. The arts speak to our body, our mind and our soul.

Join Us for Our Workshop on **Symphonic Empathy**, Friday, December 9, 9:00 am to 11:00 am. The workshop will explore how musical expression and communication increase our ability to connect and learn from one another. The neuroscience of how music

engages empathy will be discussed. Participants will be invited to reflect on their own relationships with music. Held at Christ Church Chapel, 254 E. Putnam Ave., Greenwich.

RSVP REQUIRED. 203-531-5500 or email: [mscaros@thegreensatgreenwich.com](mailto:mscaros@thegreensatgreenwich.com).



Caroline and Bob music therapy.

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Sheldon and Maria art.

## DISCOVER JOY

- Accredited for excellence in memory care as a Purple Flag community by the Connecticut Assisted Living Association and Alzheimer’s Association
- Recognized leader in providing the creative arts therapies as a means of communication and connection
- Small privately owned assisted living community for people with memory impairment located on the Greenwich/Westchester border

**Schedule a Tour Today**

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