

# ART for RECOVERY



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Healing Harpist, Patrice Haan



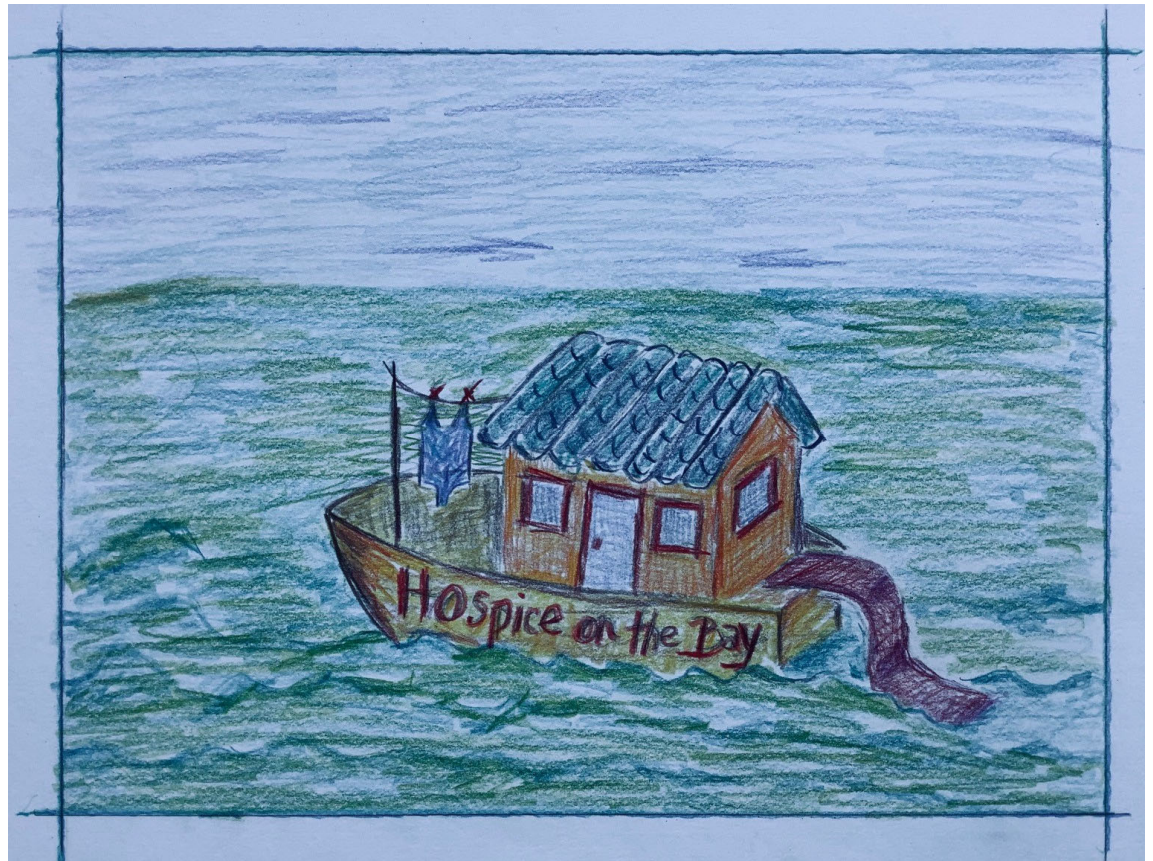
# Everyone is an Artist

- Art is innate
- We are all born creative until we are told otherwise
- When people realize they have the ability to creatively express themselves they are surprised, excited, and relaxed
- Creative Expression helps connect with an core element of who we are



## Safe Supportive Space

- When diagnosed it is not easy to talk about how it *really feels*
- Patients need a space to be honest.
- To be seen and heard with out judgement
- Connection with other adults who understand what it is like to have cancer





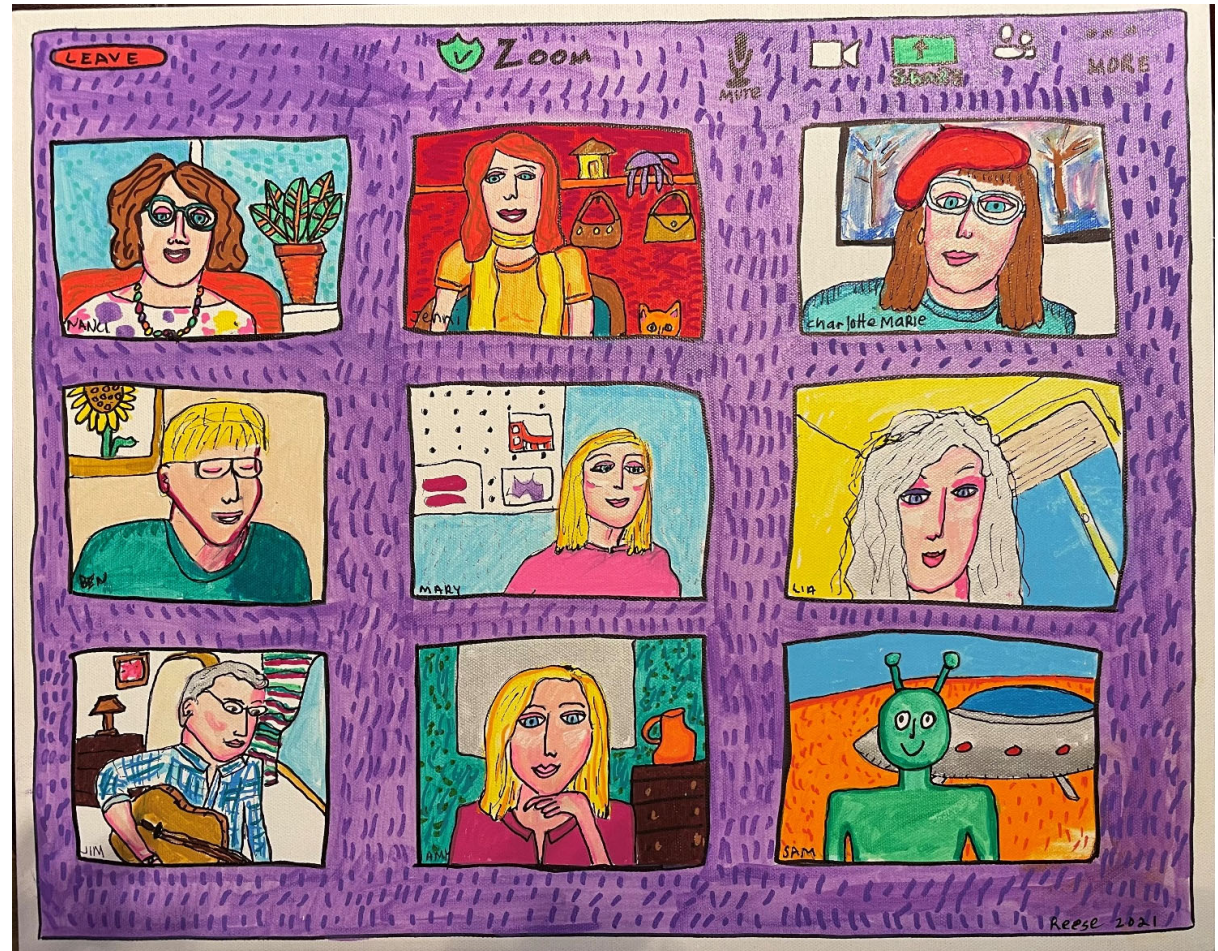
## Beginning of: Art for Recovery

- 1988 Aids Epidemic: Dr. Ernie Rosenbaum hires Cindy Perlis
- Art Plays a significant roll in AIDS patients self expression, creating community during an isolating time and leaving a legacy



## Art for Recovery Today

- Most of the patients we see are dealing with cancer or a life threatening illness.
- 7 Online Art, Music, Writing Workshops
- Bedside: Art, Music and Writing
- Soon to return to in person groups
- Firefly Project: letter writing between medical students & patients



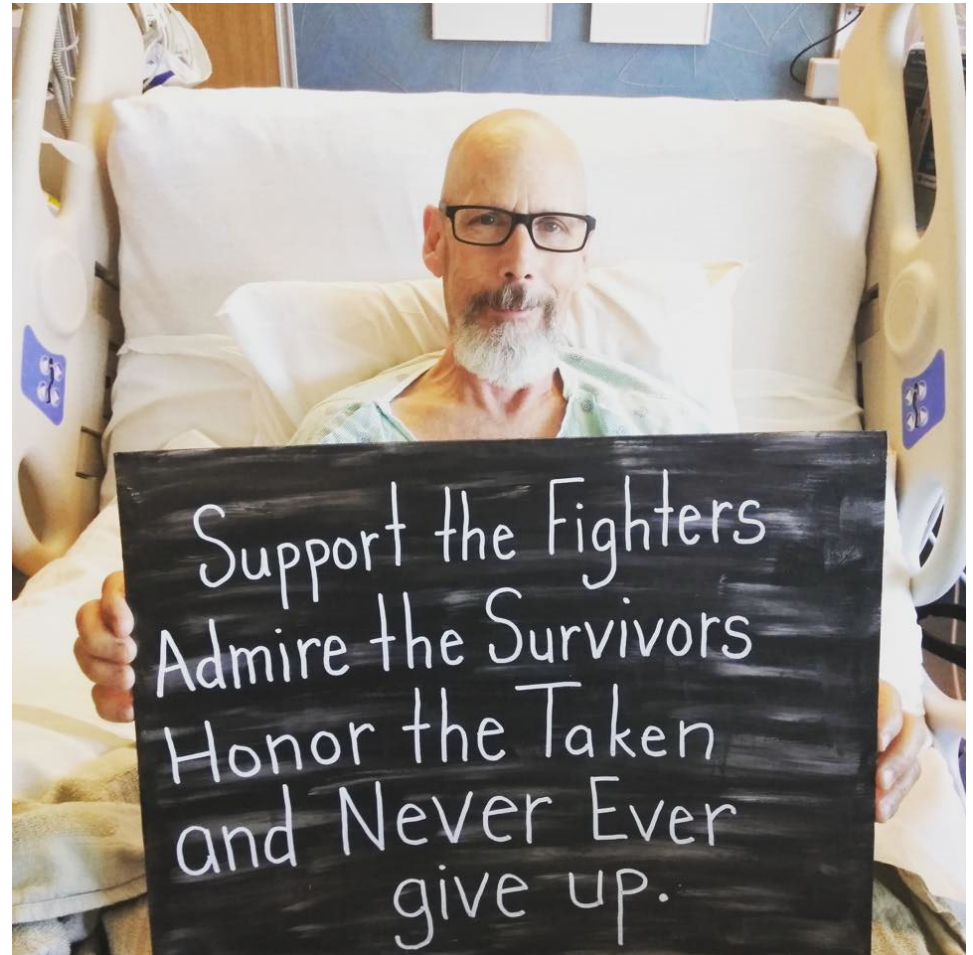


# Art for Recovery Experience

*Our patients are our teachers*

1. Connect with your creative voice
2. Cultivate community
3. Be seen and heard without judgement
4. Create personal creative expression for healing

Our artists, writers and musicians hold these safe spaces for patients to show up how ever they need to.



## Sample Workshop: Writing Prompt

### The Guest House

Rumi

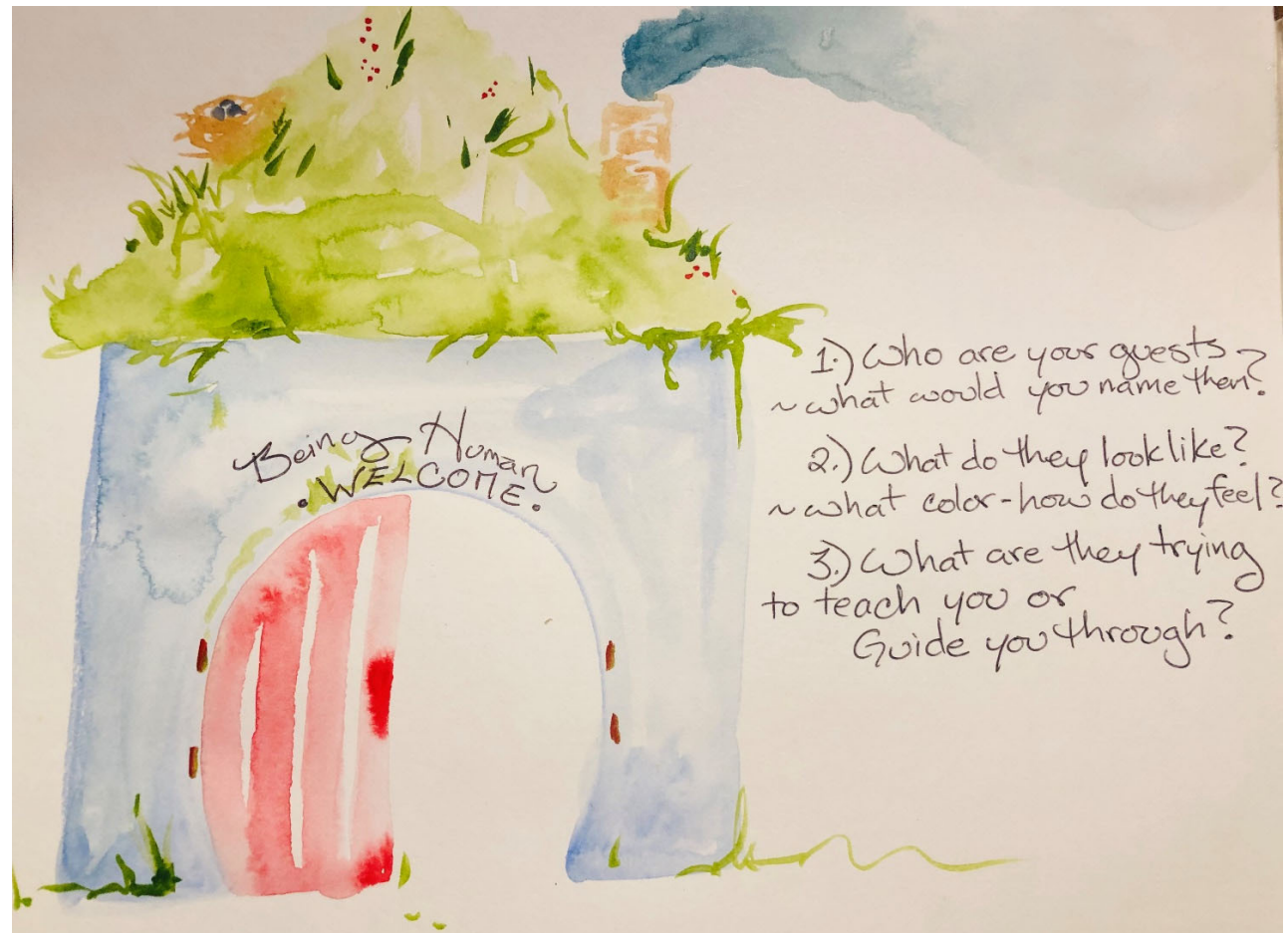
This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes  
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!  
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice.  
meet them at the door laughing and invite  
them in.

Be grateful for whatever comes.  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.





After being diagnosed with a life-threatening cancer 20 years ago, I lost my life's work and a sense of myself. I could no longer care for my child, and faced physical and emotional constraints beyond my imagination. One day, while at the UCSF Cancer Center, I stumbled into a program called "Art For Recovery." With a little history of doing crafts, I was given a pad with colored pencils and was instructed to "draw everyday." I reluctantly attempted to draw stick figures, until one day a doorway opened into myself... and I entered.

I started painting with my hands using acrylic paints, rarely using a brush. I began noticing an integration of my entire body and emotions into the work, allowing whatever colors or images that wanted to come through me, often coming from the center of where my illness began (my pancreas). My work emerged intuitively, driven by bright colors and the mystery of what appears on a blank sheet of paper.

It was as if I had stepped into the "real river" of life, finding unknown feelings, releasing stress and restoring spirits. It was an expansion of self-awareness, a reconciliation of emotional issues deepening my connection to my physical body. This intimate expression and discovery, of both what is possible from within and the connection to the outer world, has transformed my challenging life's journey and allowed me to thrive under great duress.

I use painting to address whatever issues arise on my cancer journey, from using cooling colors to soothe my nervous system, to fiery colors to engage my emotions and physical energy. For many years, when asked what treatment I'm doing, I'd say, "I am doing art."

I now live with 2 cancers and the journey has changed, along with my art. It has been a lifeline for me at every step. I am committed to supporting and developing the expression of art as a healing tool for anyone, at anytime, anywhere.



## Giving Patients Stories a Platform

- Firefly Project
- Permanent art installations
- Stories of Art for Recovery display case
- Published books:  
Bedside Manners & Patient as Teacher Anthology
- Social Media & Website



## 3 Things to Remember about Expressive Arts in Health Care

1. Everyone is an artist
2. Creative community  
is key
3. Let your patients be  
you teachers

