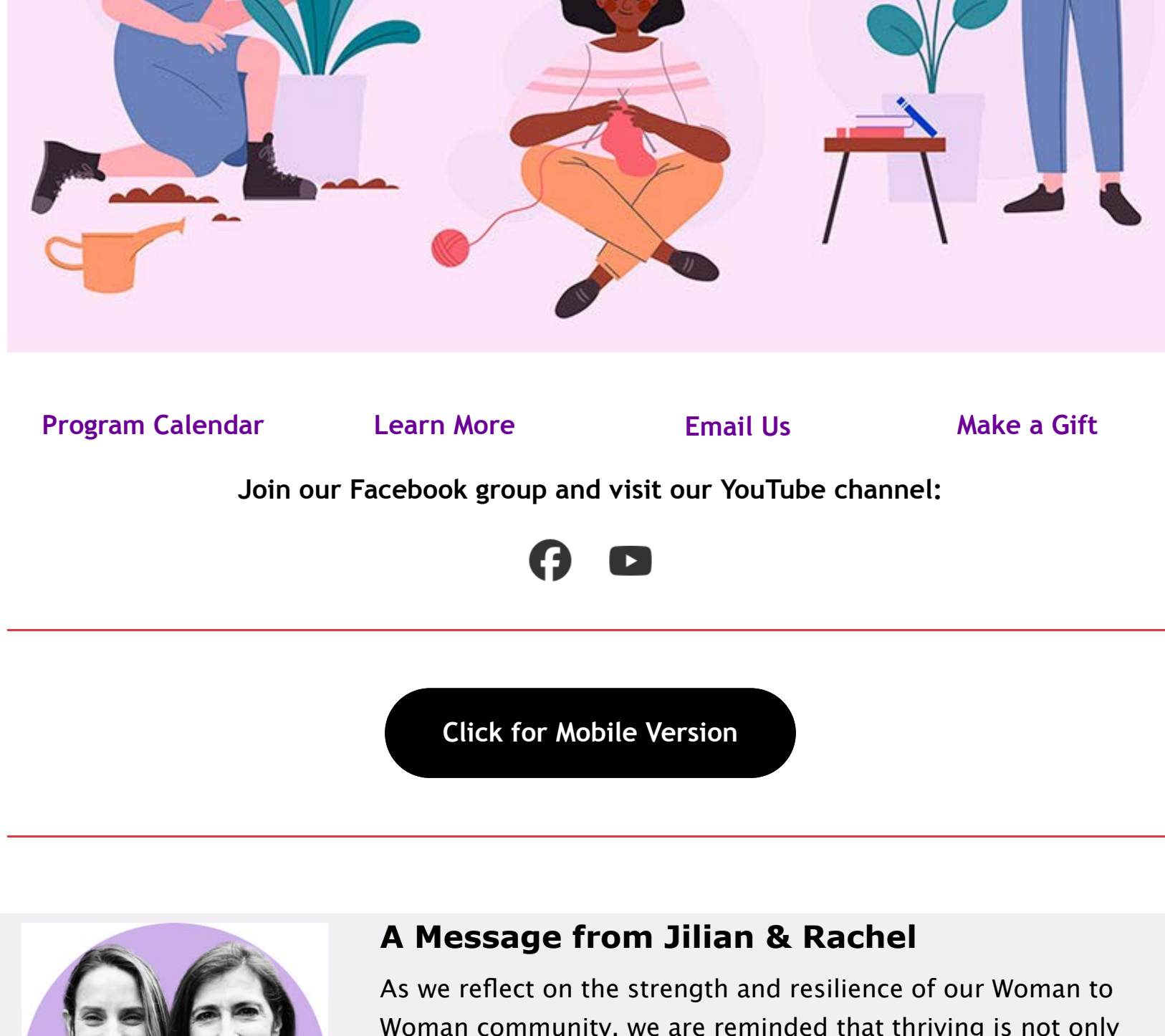




Thriving Creatively

Spring 2026



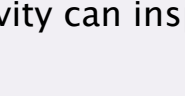
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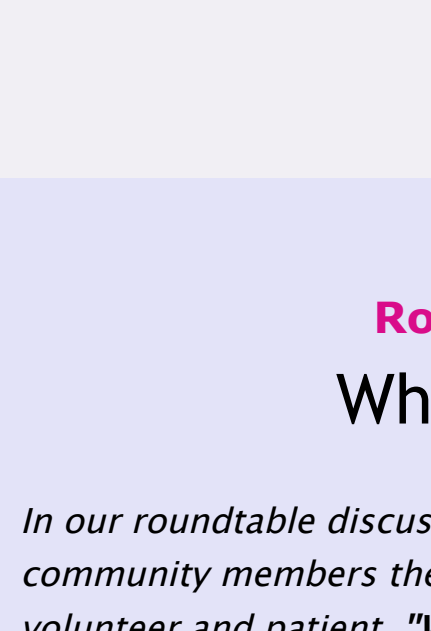
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Jillian Levinson & Rachel Justus,
Woman to Woman Program
Managers

A Message from Jillian & Rachel

As we reflect on the strength and resilience of our Woman to Woman community, we are reminded that thriving is not only about healing the body, but also nurturing the spirit through creativity and self-expression. Over the past year, members have found joy, comfort, and connection through writing, art, music, cooking, gardening, and other creative outlets that transform difficult experiences into something meaningful. This season, as we focus on Creative Thriving, we celebrate the many ways creativity can inspire hope and bring us together.



Carol Lee, Editor

A Letter from the Editor

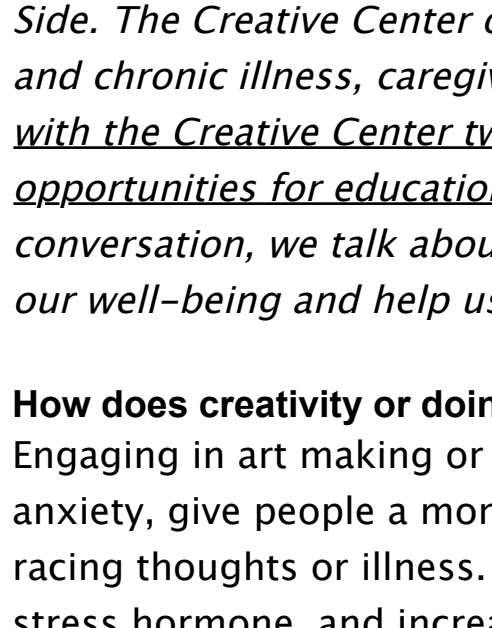
Creativity has a unique way of helping us reconnect—with ourselves, with others, and with the moments of joy and comfort that sustain us through difficult times. Continuing our Thriving theme in its many forms, this issue celebrates creative expression through everyday acts of care and connection, from handmade cards to Janet's summer chopped salad recipe.

These moments remind us that creativity is not about perfection, but about bringing warmth and intention into our lives. I hope this edition inspires you to make space for creativity in whatever form brings you joy. Thank you for continuing to uplift one another with such generosity and heart. Wishing everyone a healthy, creative summer!

Roundtable: We Asked, We Listened

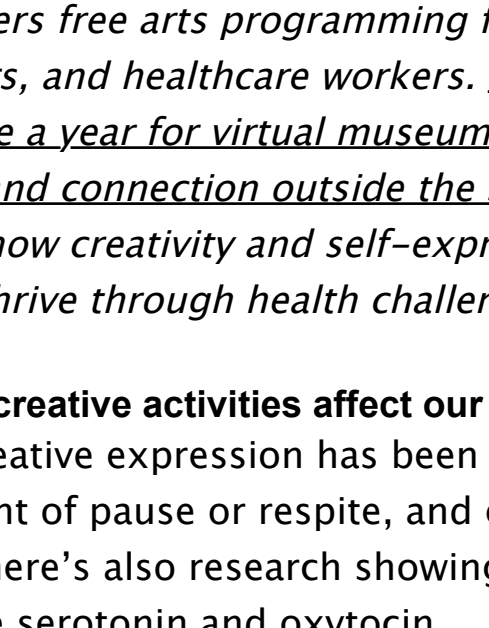
What I Do to Thrive Creatively

In our roundtable discussion, we showcase a range of perspectives by asking three community members the same questions. Today, we've asked a staff member, survivor volunteer and patient, "What is something special you do to thrive creatively?"



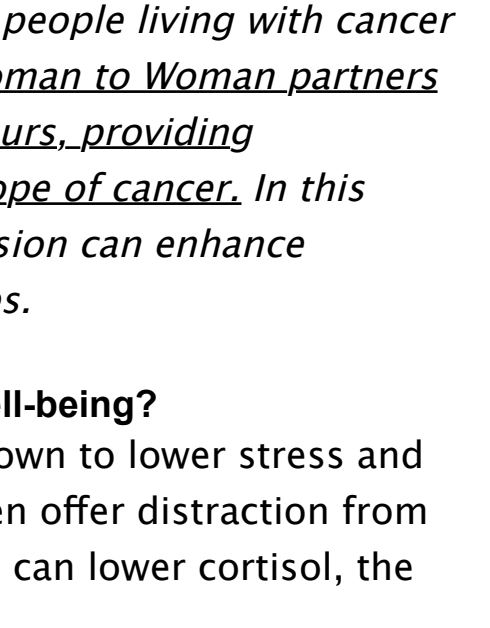
Shakila Foster
Mount Sinai Social Worker

"I enjoy **reading** of perspective, **walking** to clear my head, and **painting** as a pressure-free creative outlet. **Cooking** also helps me stay present and grounded. Together, these practices leave me feeling refreshed, focused, and inspired."



America Calderon
Woman to Woman Volunteer

"**Coloring** helps me slow down and stay present, while **exercising** gives me a mental and physical reset. I also enjoy **reading** fiction to unwind and spark my imagination. Together, these practices help me feel balanced, energized, and inspired."



Suki Schorer
Gynecologic Cancer Survivor

"As a former NYC Ballet dancer, I continue to dance. I practice **Argentine Tango** even through treatment and recovery. I also love **planting flowers** and **spending time with my grandchildren**. I find creativity in movement and find joy in it each day."

Ask the Expert

Liz Rubel on the Healing Power of Creativity



Liz Rubel is the Programs and Partnerships Coordinator at the Creative Center, a nonprofit arts organization under University Settlement in Manhattan's Lower East Side. The Creative Center offers free arts programming for people living with cancer and chronic illness, caregivers, and healthcare workers. Woman to Woman partners with the Creative Center twice a year for virtual museum tours, providing opportunities for education and connection outside the scope of cancer. In this conversation, we talk about how creativity and self-expression can enhance our well-being and help us thrive through health challenges.

How does creativity or doing creative activities affect our well-being?

Engaging in art making or creative expression has been shown to lower stress and anxiety, give people a moment of pause or respite, and even offer distraction from racing thoughts or illness. There's also research showing it can lower cortisol, the stress hormone, and increase serotonin and oxytocin.

Why is it helpful to engage creatively when we are not feeling well emotionally or physically?

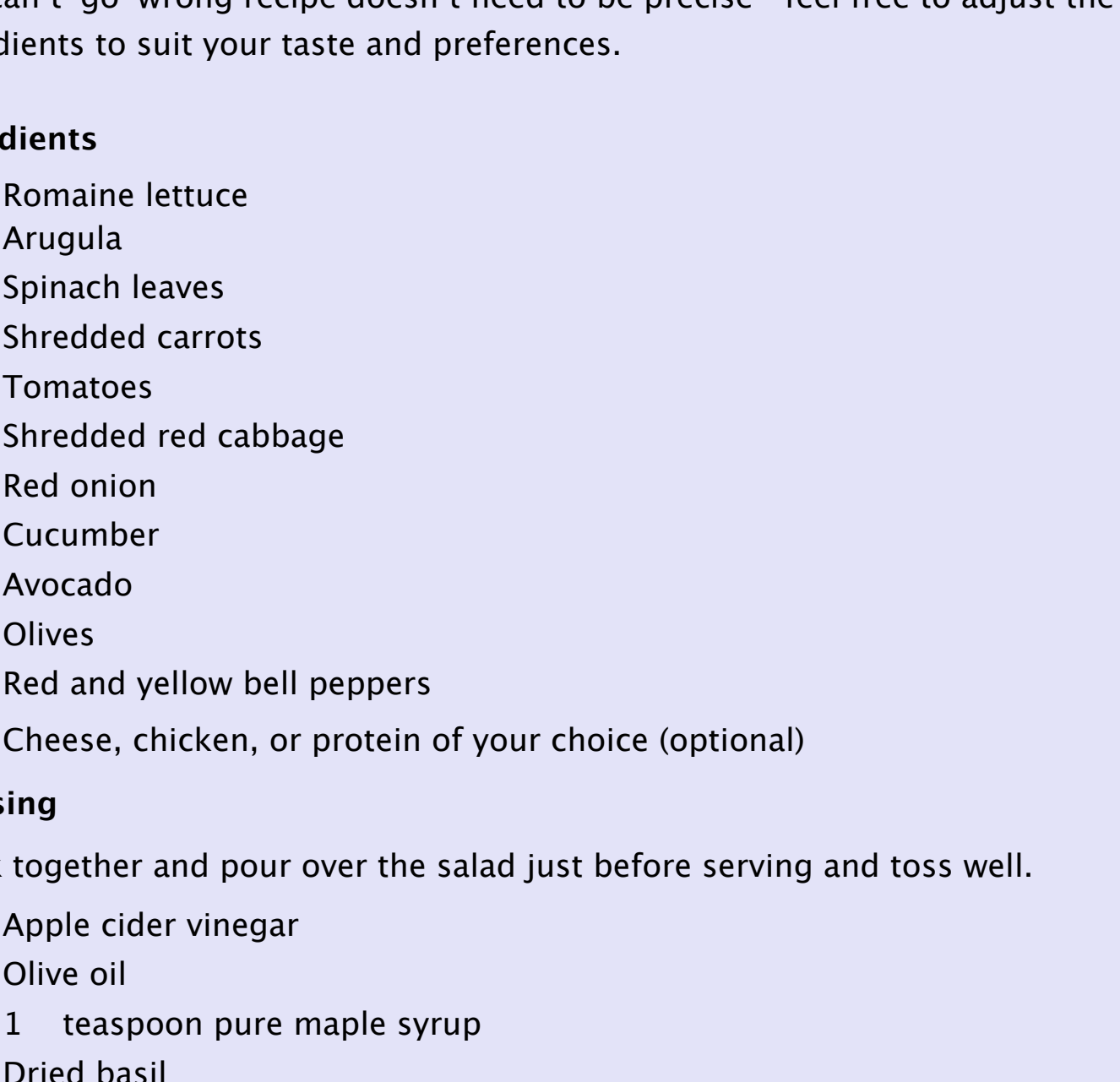
When someone isn't feeling well, creativity offers a break from what the mind is holding—stress, pain, or worry—and creates a moment of pause. It can also be a way to express what's hard to say in words. Working with color, texture, or materials helps redirect attention and can feel grounding or even uplifting, opening space for relief, calm, and a softer emotional reset in the moment.

What are some fun and simple projects we can do to thrive creatively this summer?

Start with what you already enjoy—creativity can live in cooking, gardening, styling your home, or even designing a mocktail menu. A handmade card is a simple, gratifying project we can return to throughout the year to thrive creatively and brighten someone's day.

Liz generously provided instructions for making your own greeting cards. Scroll to see more.

Spring Greetings Can Bring Summer Meetings



What you'll need:

- Card stock, construction paper, printer paper, [pre-folded cards](#)
- Scissors, glue stick, markers, colored pencils, or any art materials
- Magazines, fabric scraps, printed photos, dried flowers, stickers, etc.
- Pen, envelope, and stamp for mailing