# Creative Coping

A Collection of Poetry and Art Celebrating Mental Health and Resilience **2024** 

Published by Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i

"Creative Coping: A Collection of Poetry and Art Celebrating Mental Health and Resilience 2024"

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### Aloha kākou,\*

Thank you for joining us on a healing journey through art, poetry, and being in community with each other.

This collection of art and poetry shares the works of those who attended our "Creative Coping" workshops in 2024 or who use creativity for self-expression, self-reflection, and healing. These artists and poets demonstrate the strength to try something new, to take risks, and to be vulnerable.

We hope that something in these pages will spark your own creativity. And we hope that you will try the guided exercises at the back of the book and share your creativity with us.

Thank you to Ken Lee, Rüdiger Rückmann, Paige Su, and Jayna Wong for creating safe, creative spaces; and to Amber Drake and Anastasha Schielzeth for sharing healing exercises with us.

With aloha and appreciation,

Rachelle Chang Executive Director Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i













#### **Creative Coping 2024 Workshop Sponsor:**

**Samaritan Counseling Center Hawai'i** (SCCH) provides professional and accessible mental health counseling sensitive to the spiritual traditions of individuals, families, and communities in Hawai'i, regardless of their ability to pay. SCCH also participates in community events and outreach to increase awareness about mental health resources and help reduce the stigma of mental illness.

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Hawai'i offers programs of education and real-life recovery for families affected by mental illness and anyone interested in being better informed. Programs and support groups are prepared and delivered by people who know firsthand the struggles of having a loved one afflicted with a mental illness as well as those who live in recovery.

#### **Creative Coping 2024 Presenters:**

#### **Creative Coping: Photography**

**Kenneth Lee** is a freelance photographer, with a photography business shooting sports and people for 20 years, and a licensed clinical social worker.

#### **Creative Coping: Poetry**

**Rüdiger Rückmann** had his first poem published when he was 7. Since then, his poems have been published in anthologies, magazines, and shown in museums and galleries throughout the U.S.

#### **Creative Coping: Watercolor**

**Paige Su**, the artist behind Poshiki LLC, was born and raised on O'ahu. Her watercolor paintings celebrate everyday beauty from the misty rain in Mānoa Valley to a chilled mango on a hot summer day. She helps participants rediscover the joy of making art like when they were kids.

#### **Creative Coping: Doodling**

**Jayna Wong** is pursuing a PhD in Microbiology at the University of Hawai'i. A lifelong artist, Jayna's art reflects on her upbringing and life in Hawai'i, and mainly consists of realism painting.

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# Creative Coping: Poetry & Art

"Creative Coping" Participants How Art Inspires My Everyday Life

Art is weaved into my life through music, dance, painting, and so much more. It keeps me alive and makes me appreciate the little things in life.

It is both a refuge and an expansion.

Gives me hope! Brings out hidden feelings.

Distracts me from thinking about stressful things going on.

Inspires me to be grateful everyday.

Art helps me tap into my creative side, inner child, and allows me to be gentle with myself.

Art opens me up to possibilities.

Art is a way for me to step out of my comfort zone. It pushes me to look for ways to improve myself and accept myself.

I'm inspired by art expression (including poetry) which has the power to facilitate communication that can cultivate understanding for individual coping and also among others to build community.

I enjoy the play with words, it's the thing that keeps my neurodivergent brain just free enough to function in this world.

Art rewards me to be out of my mind and into my body, while connecting to my spirit.

It's a companion I can always count on even during rough patches, and it's always a path to self.

Art transcends me to a place that's peaceful, safe, and filled with joy.

# Susan Foard Special Day

Who can make today special? Is it the tree, my dog or the sky? OR can it be me? Yes, whispered the wind. Everyone can make special days shouted the rain. The sun rose and said, "every being makes every day special."

### Ying Wencie Hoang Lavenders



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# Ying Wencie Hoang Lavenders in Hawai'i



## Zari Breathwork



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I walk into my yard and the life starts to show This beautiful space I am so happy to know

The chickens come running from across the grass I already know what question they want to ask

The ponies they see me and nod in my direction They are grazing on their favorite grass collection

I check on my plants and my garden, it grows Finally, finally, something that shows.

### Rachelle Chang

Mango Sorbet

I eat the bitter before the sweet Leafy greens, cucumbers, beets, Plated beautifully to please My heart healthy and at ease

And then bright sunlight in a bowl A burst of sweet to light my soul Childhood memories replay With each taste of mango sorbet



## Zhanè Dukes Calm In Nature

Galm in nature Is what I need, Counseling Center Hawaii Galm in nature Is what I seek. Feeling the Breeze, the trees The bee's, seeing The creatures Staring at me, Galm in nature .Is where . Til be. http://www.samaritancounselingcenterhawaii.org/

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As a pink rose quartz sunset softens the days glow,

I too, allow my body to release.

My shoulders drop My jaw relaxes Even my thoughts seem to cease...

I gaze towards that evening sky with its unrelenting ease,

And give myself fully to the gravitational pull that drops me to my knees.

Sophia Carpus (age 5) Watercolor



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# Emjay Manna Serenity



S. Jou Maunalua



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### Sheldon Lee Moving Box

In my dream, I brought a moving box, large enough for someone to sit in, with knees bent, to a law school lecture room, where four of us sat around tables, pushed together, studying, but not cooperating and one of my classmates stood up and accused me of being a rebel. "I'm going to report you to the Dean's office," he said. I looked in the box and deep inside were scraps of tissue paper, green and red, accidentally forming a flower blossom, reminiscent of a shower scrubber, tired and flat. Someone honked a car horn, angrily, three times, at 3:30 in the morning, interrupting the story formed by illogically matching bits of my life and I wondered, in the darkness, whether it would have been better to have stayed there, in the light.

Sheldon Lee Chatter

> Yellow finches swarm in the avocado tree, talking all at once.



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### Thomas Taylor Embrace Art with Springtime Florals

See the love, see the beauty that can come out of you! See your work is made with love like this mini floral arrangement. It looks as if a springtime bouquet of flowers were birthed out of a seashell. You can EMBRACE ART and let your love shine. Like the morning sun that screams DAYLIGHT! I'M HERE!



# Thomas Taylor Embrace Giving with Party Favors



You can have a memorable party or event and do some family bonding with easy party favors.

1. Decorate party favor boxes with rubber stamps, stickers, or markers.

2. Fill them with fun and inexpensive items that you find, make, or purchase, like candy, coins, shells, and small toys. *Note: small items may be a choking hazard*.

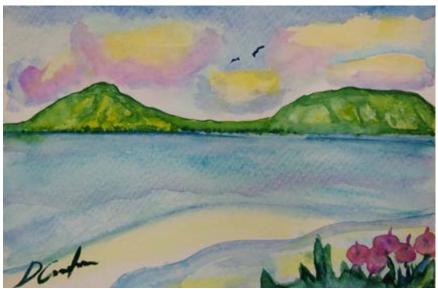
Be a giver, not a taker. Embrace giving!

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## AMS Maunalua



# DCW Maunalua



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### Rüdiger Rückmann Why I Left the Ancient Farm

It was often suggested that I stray far from these fields of impenetrable hay and leave behind a creek that winds its way through land cleared of ancient stone near forest as dark as mystery, our home.

My family imagined me in a different place where I wouldn't be reigned in, could embrace a world where I belonged, not misplaced, I a man never quite ready to admit he yearned to find other men who had also been spurned.

Now on an island a thousand miles away from harm and held without regret for years in a man's arms I tell our daughter about that far-away farm, of endless fields and prayers not to be alone forever, of leaving fear behind, of reaching home.

Anisa Wiseman Today

> Not going good I wish it goodbye That's not right I have to try

Turn it around That frown upside down Turn happy an adjective Into a noun

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Anisa Wiseman Outside

> Sun showing Birds singing Chickens lounging Ponies grazing Seedlings popping

Basia Olejniczak One-Line Self-Portrait



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### R.E. Paxton Summer Night on the River

Beneath the misty moon our boat gliding over starlit water. you picked up your guitar; no tes soorthing as the sound of an ancient lute flowed out across the water whispering of autumn leaves and Gamboo sighing in the wind. Closing my cyes, I could see he fairy forests full of mists, yoss covering the rocks and form the rocks and forms MOSS Cove cascading water falls, plunging down into deep moonlit go and wild dark ravines. As the notes faded out across the water, opening my cyes as if waking from a dream I heard only the faint murmur of the wind rippling the silver waters as our boat sailed upriver silently towards the stars?



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### R.E. Paxton In the Lonely Rainfall of Late Autumn

silont shadows in the dusk creep across the ridge Last night I watched you going down the mountain it you disappeared the mists and rain. And, nors, tonight, the pale lamp of the waning moore lights the empty mat and pillow where last night you lay your head Alone, here, now, in the chill moonlight where last I watch the gust of wind outside lashing the trees and the pale waning moon a path across the river in the autumn darkness painting winding towards the bright River of stars.

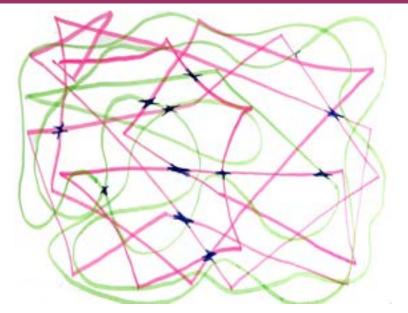
Sheldon Lee The Deer

> I am not a hunter. I don't want to shoot a deer, just for sport. What I'd like to do is follow the deer. It wants to show me something about how to rid the world of evil beings that cause so much hurt to gentle ones.

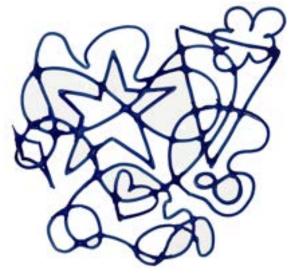
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# Doodling: My Mess

AC



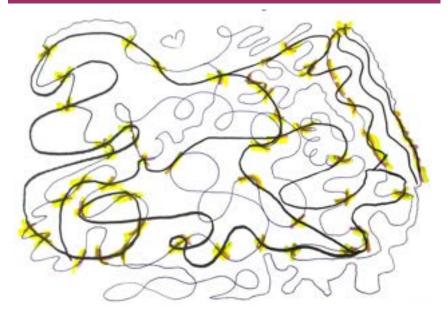
Jayna Wong Doodling: Brown Sugar Oatmeal



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### Mariam Ammar

### Doodling: Don't Be a Perfectionist



### Mariam Ammar Go With the Flow



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## 2024 NAMI Hawai'i State Conference Participants We are NAMI Hawai'i

#### We are...

Strong Ohana Made of love Capable of all things Worthy Ah-mazing Unique Boundless Loved





Our roots are in... Hawai'i Family Faith Jesus God, source, nature Namu Shinnyo

We care about... Mental health connection Family Ourselves and loving others Our community You!

#### We fear that... Others don't know about mental health People won't get help Hurting lasts No one sees me Our voices aren't heard We don't find our full authenticity

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Together we can... Help and heal Overcome Grow Move mountains Always show aloha Know that we aren't alone Be more predestined to be worthy here Make life better Spread more aloha See tomorrow! Communicate Create synergy Shine on forever!



We are... More than enough Going to be okay Flawed and that's okay Ohana Strong together! Whole

We are ... Boundki preset WOR Jesus (7 - Name Shing yo ) Our roots are in. God, source, notice - mulmental health We care about t lovery a bats we don't find our fin athenting We fear that AND GOOS MIC Togeth We CNEVEDMA ENOUSI the Jones (Tom ave. DHANA

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# Bonus: Guided Exercises

## Table of Contents Guided Exercises

We invite you to follow along with these guided exercises and express your feelings and creativity.

### Exercise #1: Outdoor Photography

Courtesy of Ken Lee

### Exercise #2: Gratitude Poem

Courtesy of Rüdiger Rückmann

### Exercise #3: One-Line Self-Portrait Doodle

Courtesy of Jayna Wong

### Exercise #4: Meditative Mermaid Coloring Page

Courtesy of Amber Drake, www.amberdrakeart.com

### **Exercise #5: Writing Prompt**

As We See 'Āina, We See Ourselves — Your Living Story as Nature

Courtesy of Anastasha Schielzeth of Anastahsa Maria Healing Arts, LLC

How do you cope during challenging times? You are welcome to share your creativity by emailing info@samaritanhawaii.org.

We hope to see you at future "Creative Coping" workshops!

# Creative Coping Exercise #1 Outdoor Photography

**Purpose**: To find beauty in nature, appreciate where you are, and be in the present.

**Getting Started**: Choose a place where you feel comfortable and relaxed. It could be in your backyard or at the beach, a park, or a garden. Wear comfortable shoes.

Materials: A camera or cell phone.

1. Take photos of things that capture your attention.

2. Look in the distance, at mountains, the sky, the ocean. Look nearby, at people and things around you. Look closer, at flowers, leaves, birds, and insects.

3. Look at how light reflects on objects and how shadows change appearances.

4. Be careful and respectful if you are taking photos of people, especially children.

5. How do you feel when you are taking photos? How do the photos make you feel?



Source: Ken Lee

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# Creative Coping Exercise #2 Gratitude Poem

**Purpose**: To live in the moment and feel appreciation for good things in your life.

**Getting Started**: Think about how you are feeling now, or your favorite memory, or a place you love. In 3-5 lines, write sentences or fragments that express how you feel or what happened that makes the memory or place so indelible.

In this loosely-structured poem, keep the line length consistent, with approximately the same number of words (usually not more than 8 words). and keep the rhyme pattern consistent (near rhymes are fine). You don't have to strive for perfection!

"When I sit down and write, I'm going to try my best, and my best is going to be what I can achieve in the moment," says Rüdiger. "Most poets are pretty earnest when they write."

Materials: Pen/pencil and paper; or computer/tablet.

Source: Rüdiger Rückmann

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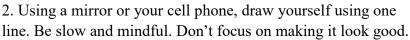
# *Creative Coping Exercise #3* One-Line Self-Portrait Doodle

Purpose: To exercise our eyes-brain-body axis and let go of perfectionism.

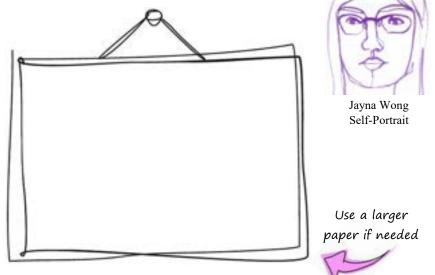
Getting Started: Let's be honest — it's going to be weird. So let's embrace that weirdness that can come with art and the vulnerability that comes with it too.

Materials: Pen or marker, paper, and mirror or cell phone.

1. Choose a color.



If you need to get back to a section, simply trace back over a line. If you lift your pen/pencil off the paper, just put it back down right where you left off and continue drawing.



Source: Jayna Wong

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# Creative Coping Exercise #4 <u>Meditative Mermaid Coloring Page</u>



Source: Amber Drake, www.amberdrakeart.com

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# Creative Coping Exercise #5 As We See 'Āina, We See Ourselves – Your Living Story as Nature

Your life is a living story, rich with wisdom passed down and learned through experience. This journey, filled with knowledge, resilience, and growth, is an expression of *waiwai*—abundance.

**Purpose**: Through these "I AM" statements, explore the deep connection between your inner self and the natural world. Let this reflection help you uncover your truth, purpose, and the wisdom you hold within.

**Getting Started**: Take a moment to reflect on who you are and how you embody the natural world. Think of empowering "I AM" statements that connect you with the elements of nature—' $\bar{a}ina$ , the environment around us. The elements of air, water, earth, and fire, present throughout the eco-systems that sustain life, also exist within you. Each reflects a part of your unique essence and truth.

Writing Prompt: I	am like	(element) and like
the	(element) I am	

Source: Anastasha Schielzeth of Anastahsa Maria Healing Arts, LLC

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#### Now, extend this reflection to your communities.

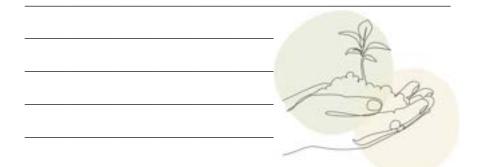
Once complete, take time to think about the communities you feel most connected with. Write empowering "WE ARE" statements that reflect the abundance of wisdom, unity, and strength within these groups. Express the shared essence and collective energy that thrives within your community.

Consider these prompts:

- WE ARE (element) and like (element), WE ARE (blank).
- How does your community embody the fluidity of water or the rootedness of the earth?
- In what ways do you ignite passion and action together like fire?

Explore how the natural world inspires your collective power, and let these "WE ARE" statements reflect the abundance that lives within your shared experience.

Writing Prompt:	We are like	(element) and like
the	(element) we are	



Source: Anastasha Schielzeth of Anastahsa Maria Healing Arts, LLC

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