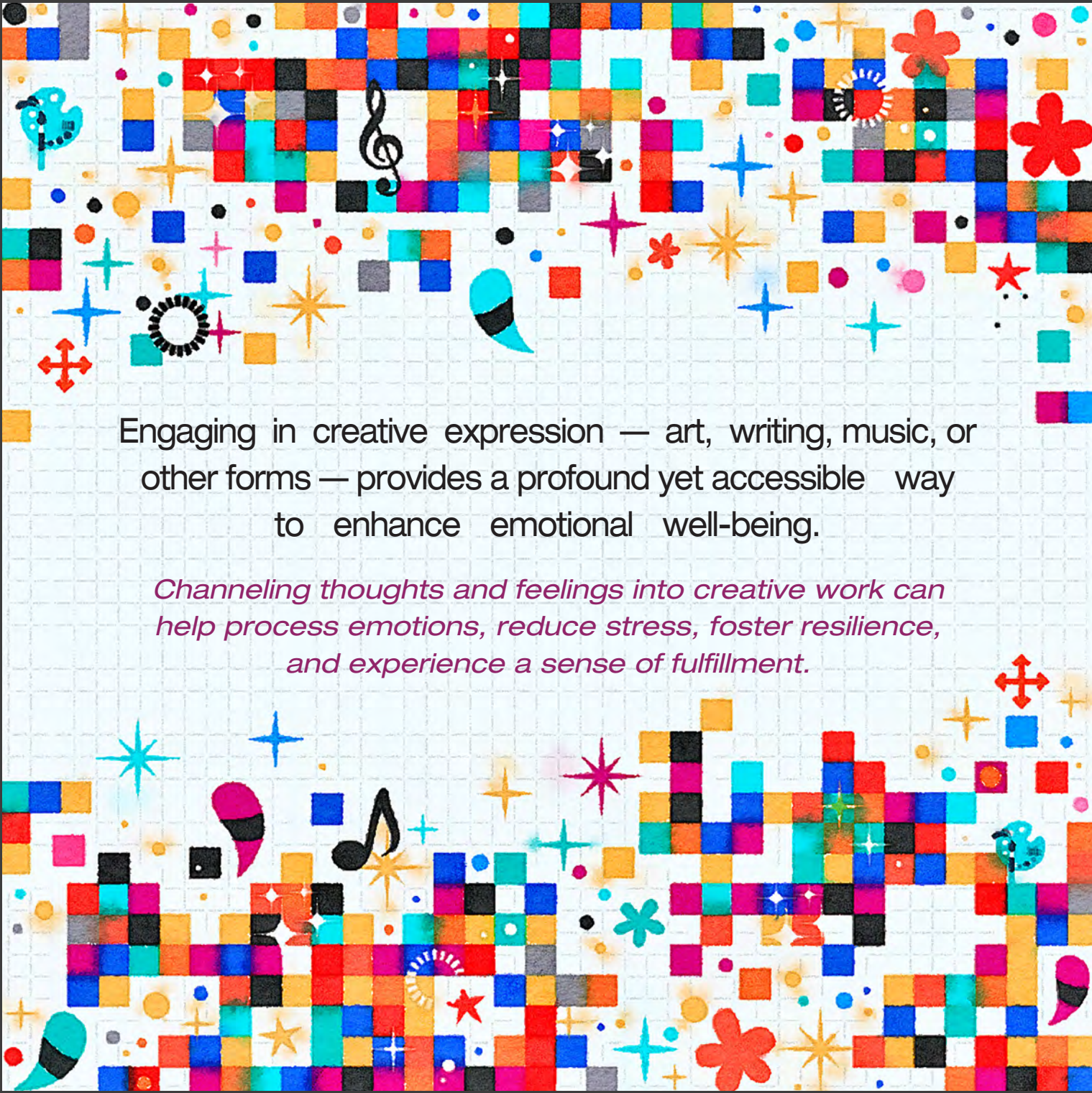


CREATIVE EXPRESSION

as a Mental Health Tool



Engaging in creative expression — art, writing, music, or other forms — provides a profound yet accessible way to enhance emotional well-being.

Channeling thoughts and feelings into creative work can help process emotions, reduce stress, foster resilience, and experience a sense of fulfillment.



WHY *C*REATIVITY MATTERS *for Mental Health*

Studies have shown that engaging in creative activities can:

Reduce stress

Activities like painting, crafting, or playing music help to lower cortisol levels.

Enhance mood

Writing in a journal or composing a poem provides an outlet to work through and articulate thoughts and feelings, often leading to a sense of clarity.

Build resilience

Creative problem-solving is inherent in artistic endeavors and strengthens our ability to adapt.

Find joy

Engaging in creative outlets provides a safe space to explore and make sense of complex feelings, often leading to moments of joy and personal discovery.

*C*REATIVE EXPRESSION IN ACTION *Art as therapy*

Painting, drawing, or sculpting are excellent ways to channel emotions. For some, creating art — free from the pressure of perfection — provides a space to explore feelings that might be difficult to verbalize.

Writing

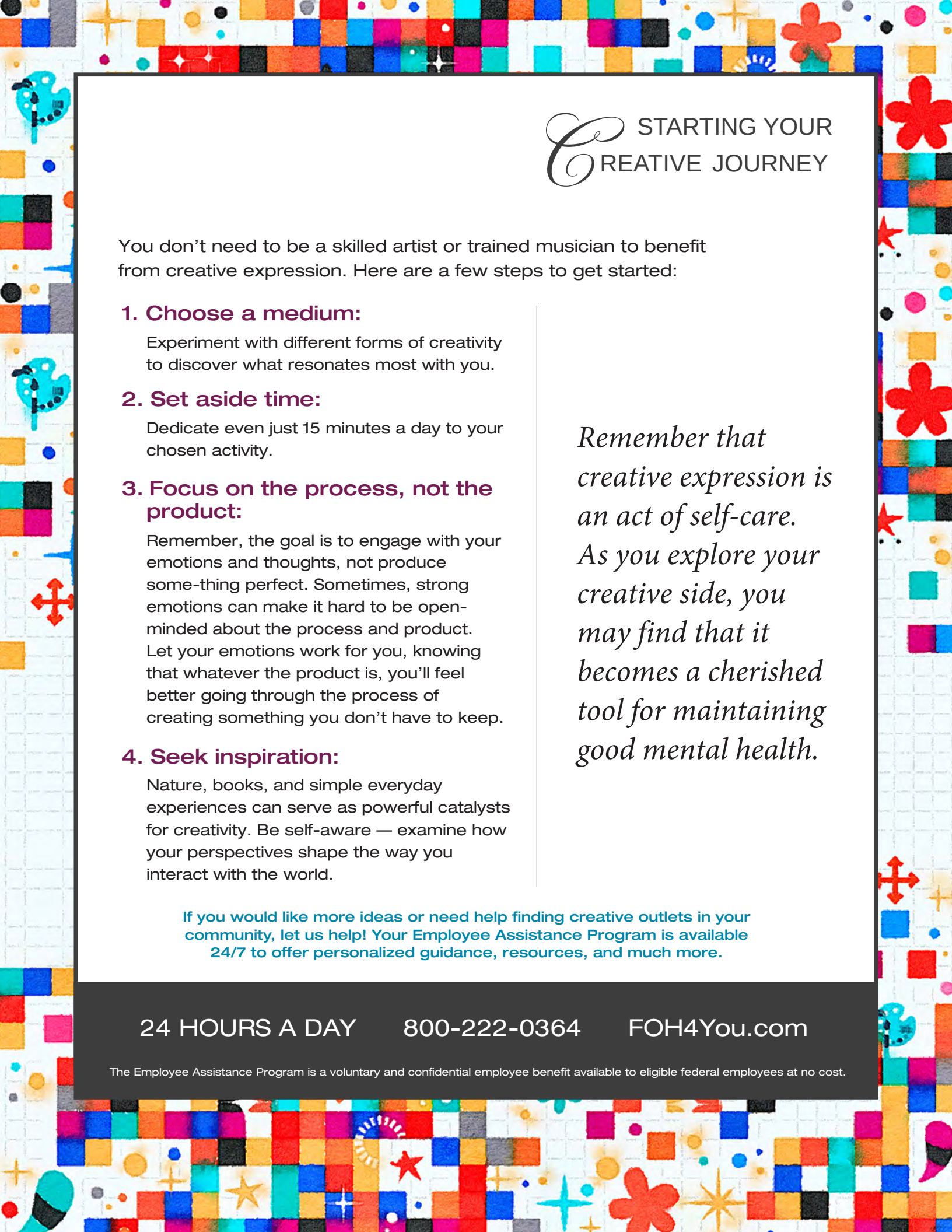
Journaling, storytelling, or poetry writing can be transformative. The act of putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) can help untangle thoughts and identify emotional and behavioral patterns.

Music and movement

Playing an instrument, singing, or even dancing can relieve tension, engage the body, and uplift the spirit.

Group activities

Sharing ideas and innovations with others fosters connection and builds community, and joining a creative workshop or collaborative project, like volunteering, can increase feelings of belonging.



STARTING YOUR CREATIVE JOURNEY

You don't need to be a skilled artist or trained musician to benefit from creative expression. Here are a few steps to get started:

1. Choose a medium:

Experiment with different forms of creativity to discover what resonates most with you.

2. Set aside time:

Dedicate even just 15 minutes a day to your chosen activity.

3. Focus on the process, not the product:

Remember, the goal is to engage with your emotions and thoughts, not produce something perfect. Sometimes, strong emotions can make it hard to be open-minded about the process and product. Let your emotions work for you, knowing that whatever the product is, you'll feel better going through the process of creating something you don't have to keep.

4. Seek inspiration:

Nature, books, and simple everyday experiences can serve as powerful catalysts for creativity. Be self-aware — examine how your perspectives shape the way you interact with the world.

Remember that creative expression is an act of self-care. As you explore your creative side, you may find that it becomes a cherished tool for maintaining good mental health.

If you would like more ideas or need help finding creative outlets in your community, let us help! Your Employee Assistance Program is available 24/7 to offer personalized guidance, resources, and much more.

24 HOURS A DAY

800-222-0364

FOH4You.com

The Employee Assistance Program is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to eligible federal employees at no cost.

MARCH



**Community and
Giving Back:**

**Leaving Our
Footprints**

LIVE WEBINAR

Community and Giving Back: Leaving Our Footprints

In this webinar, participants will learn the mental and physical benefits of service, how to overcome fears, and find purpose to get involved. Helping and supporting others can spread joy and also be rewarding and uplifting. Participants will leave with the resources and motivation to be inspired to give back and support their community.

Wednesday, March 12, 2025
2-3 p.m. E.T.

REGISTER



Tell us about your
EAP experience!

