



The Armstrong Center for Hope
Psychological and Spiritual Wellness for All Ages

just
BREATHE

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Finding Mental Health Support Through Art

Imagine not being able to find the words to express how you feel. That lack of expression can turn sadness into frustration. The screaming we hear in our heads needs to be released to the world, even if it's just a whisper out loud. Art gives our expression a face. The sneakers matched to our jackets. The amount of chili powder used to season a dish. The choice to make our poems rhyme or not. The capacity to express ourselves through art is generous because it is without bounds. Art is not limited to the sculptures and paintings we see in museums. Art is endless. Our ability to create can come from anywhere. The clothes we wear, the food we cook, the poems we write and much more. Being creative is a righteous outlet. How and what we create gives us the opportunity to express ourselves. The expression of one's thoughts and feelings gives us the potential to be seen and heard.

COVID 19 has changed the world, and we are still trying to adapt and adjust. Quarantine has allowed for people to get the rest they maybe did not know they needed. While others were able to tap into their creativity. I personally learned to paint at the height of the pandemic. I began watching Bob Ross videos for nostalgia, and it turned into inspiration. I invested in art materials and began to paint every weekend. My creativity was able to flourish through painting. I began to paint abstract black women, cartoon characters, outdoor scenes and now I am currently practicing painting faces.

One of my favorite quotes is “draw a monster, why is it a monster?” said by Janice Lee. This quote always leaves me thinking about perspective. Our vision, our thoughts, our feelings are just that, ours! Expression is never right or wrong. Expression is meant to heal and soothe. Think of eating your favorite meal after having a hard day. Listening and singing to your favorite song while sitting in traffic. Art provides that sense of comfort and understanding. I encourage you to create and express yourself in a new way.—**Georleena E. Douglas, MA, LCMHCA**

It Takes Strength

It takes strength to be firm, It takes courage to be gentle

It takes strength to conquer It takes courage to surrender.

It takes strength to be certain, It takes courage to have doubt.

It takes strength to fit in, It takes courage to stand out.

It takes strength to feel a friend's pain, It takes courage to feel your own pain.

It takes strength to endure abuse, It takes courage to stop it.

It takes strength to stand alone, It takes courage to lean on another.

It takes strength to love, It takes courage to be loved.

It takes strength to survive, It takes courage to live.

-Unknown Author

Welcoming Our New Staff



Marjorah Byers

Marjorah Byers is a graduating senior of North Carolina Central University. She is currently earning her bachelor's degree in Psychology and plans to attend graduate school in the upcoming Fall of 2022. Marjorah was born and raised in Gastonia, NC. In her free time she enjoys singing for church, journaling, and decorating events.



Hillary Dietahin, BS

Hillary was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and resided in Rockford, Illinois from three years old until high school graduation. In the Spring of 2016, Hillary graduated from Joliet Junior College and received her Associates degree and then graduated again in 2019 from Central State University and received her B.S in Psychology. During her time at Joliet Junior College and Central State University, Hillary was a collegiate athlete playing women's basketball. Hillary was also apart of the Student Athlete Advisory Council.

Hillary currently attends North Carolina Central University where she is a junior researcher alongside John Sollers III and Christopher Edwards and is working on the completions of her Masters degree in Clinical Psychology.

In her free time, Hillary enjoys cooking, putting together puzzles, and traveling



Wendy Cavalieri

Wendy Cavalieri is a Business Office Intern with the Armstrong Center for Hope. She is a student at Durham Technical Community College and will complete the Medical Office Administration program in May 2022. Originally from Washington State, Wendy moved to North Carolina in 1996 with her husband and daughters. Her internship with the ACFH has been a positive and enjoyable learning experience.

Words of Reflection, by Reginald Wilson, MSW, LMCSWA

Here they come,
With sword like pens in one hand and ink in the other,
Ready for battle with shields of journals and arrows of paper,
Fighting the ills of the spirit and warring against the ever present confused
laced writers block of comparisons,

The antithesis of self worth,

Yet we March with shoes laced tight and hearts beating the percussion of the
rallying cry,

No more shutting eyes pretending to be sleep, no no no,
Now we fortify our words with love dripping resiliency like a solitary star in
the sky or lily amongst the weeds,
We are here,

Journals awaiting to be fed.

Community Events

Wednesdays at the Well: **Wednesdays at the Well** is a consultation group for therapists and trainees interested in integrating spirituality into mental health practice. The group meets virtually on 4th Wednesdays from 12:00 to 12:55. Request the session link at tarmstrong@armstrongcfh.com. Sign up on eventbrite.

NAMI LGBTQ+ Connection Recovery Support Group online group is held online via ZOOM every 1st and 3rd Friday of the month. Sign up on namitexas.org

Worship in the Park - Boxed Lunch, Worship with live band, food trucks, and games at the Flower Field in Dorothea Dix Park. Event will be on May 15 2022 at 11:00 am. Sign up on Eventbrite.com

The Kingdom Tour, will be a night of gathering for elevation and worship through music by Maverick City and Kirk Franklin. Event will be held on June 10 2022 at 6:45 at the Coastal Credit Union Music Park @ Walnut Creek. More information at Livenationentertainment.com



About Our Organization:

Welcome to The Armstrong Center for Hope, an interdisciplinary mental health practice for children, adolescents, adults, couples, families, groups, and organizations. Our theoretical approaches include Cognitive-Behavioral, Family Systems, Psychodynamic, and Eclectic styles. Psychoeducational and personality testing are available resources at the ACFH as well. We currently accept several insurance plans, including Aetna, BlueCross BlueShield, Cigna, Magellan, and Medicaid. We also offer sliding scale rates to fit almost any budget. In addition to daytime appointments, some evening and weekend appointments are available. Our current hours are: Monday-Thursday, 8 am to 8 pm / Fridays, 8 am to 5 pm Call for an appointment today at (919) 418-1718 or e-mail us at acfinfo@armstrongcfh.com. During COVID-19, all psychotherapy and some testing appointments are held virtually in a secure telehealth environment. Face-to-face testing will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.



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OUR CLINICAL INTERESTS INCLUDE:

- Stress Management • Wellness
- Consultations • Depression • Trauma, including EMDR • Anxiety • Grief and Loss • Anger Management • Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) • Behavior Disorders • Learning Disabilities • Parenting • Marriage, Family, and Relationship Issues • African-American Concerns • Religious and Spiritual Concerns • Women's Issues
- Conflict in the Workplace • Mind/Body Connection

“Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”
– Martin Luther King Jr.

OUR CLINICAL STAFF:

Tonya D. Armstrong, Ph.D.,
M.T.S., LP

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Kayla Chavis, BA

Hillary Dietahin, BS

Marjoriah Byers

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A Word From Our Founder & CEO



*Spring is like nature's
way of saying, Let's
Party!
-Robin Williams*

What do you first think of when you think of spring? Longer days? Pollen? Warmer temperatures? Taxes? Easter? Resurrection? Admittedly, we all have our unique viewpoints on what spring means and what to expect. As Covid lingers for the beginning of its third year, we can look back and see the changes that have occurred in our lives. Perhaps there are new additions to our families, little ones who've never known a world without Covid. Maybe there have been some departures, some of whom perhaps succumbed to Covid, and the voids that they have left behind. You would probably be in very good company if you're someone whose employment situation has changed. Maybe you now work from home, and maybe that's working well for you. Or you might have lost a job and been struggling to find another, even in this economy of "Now Hiring" signs everywhere. (Is it just me, or is something not adding up). I digress...

At any rate, regardless of what we've been through, we just might have developed a more somber outlook on life. Struggling with our mental health is completely understandable in this environment, and if we are wise, we are keeping a close eye on the mental health needs of ourselves as well as our family members. The ACFH remains committed to serving as a safe haven for all those who are weathering the polypandemic storms of Covid, social injustice, family instability, food and housing insecurities, and local to global conflict. And yet, how are we engaging in daily survival and growth during the 167 hours per week when we are not connecting with our therapists/counselors? Hopefully, we are using the skills and new perspectives that we're learning to both continual and novel situations. (Remember, one person's changes can create a positive ripple!) Along with that progress, I hope each of us can connect to more joy! In our cover article, Georleena Douglas generously shared how she has grown through Covid to express herself through art. Furthermore, she challenges us to find our own sweet spot—that place where interest, motivation, effort, and perhaps just a little bit of talent all converge to lead us to a new activity, or even back to an old favorite. I have found new ways to connect with my favorite form of artistic expression (music!) and have developed a YouTube channel (search for Dr. Tonya Armstrong ["Dr. T"]) to spread both information and inspiration with a wider audience. What self-expression brings you the most joy? The unpredictability of life suggests that you might want to begin. Or continue with deliberate speed. Today.



*"Spring: A
lovely
reminder of
how beautiful
change can
truly be."
-Unknown*