

In addition to medical books, literature, and board review resources, Ms. Lee has been expanding book collections and resources for wellness over the years. She has helped connect healthcare professionals to collections of audiobooks available on Libby, a free app where one can enjoy e-books and audiobooks at no cost from the Los Angeles Public Library system.

“The book clubs create a unique and special community,” Dr. Parikh said. “Whether you are an avid reader or simply looking to explore new books and ideas, the club provides a supportive and inclusive environment that fosters growth and learning. Through carefully selected books and thoughtful discussions, members can gain new insights, challenge their perspectives, and develop a deeper understanding of the world around them. Additionally, the club places a strong emphasis on developing critical thinking skills, effective communication, and teamwork, which are essential skills that can be applied in all aspects of life.”

Julie Williams is a Los Angeles based community teaching artist who really believes in bringing the community together with creativity. For the past two years, she taught a Visual Medicine workshop at our medical center (supported by a government grant) about journaling, drawing, cartooning, painting, and collage for wellness.

“This 11-week class focused on creative play and the mental health benefits of quieting the inner voice of critique and judgment and letting our hands start moving, drawing and playing with all kinds of visual creative things,” Ms. Williams said. “You can see the joy and the fun this terrific group had in these classes. Everybody just lightens up and starts having fun and reconnecting with their inner 9-year-old self. The more art we do together as a community, the more we support each other.”

Ms. Williams emphasizes the general beneficial impact of making art together without judging and criticizing.

“In my mind, one of the biggest obstacles is that people have an idea about drawing like ‘I can’t draw. I’m not an artist. I’m not going to do it.’” Ms. Williams said. “But this class is about tapping into the joy of human creativity, and it’s just the most fun, lighthearted thing. It’s not about realism. It’s not about getting it perfect. That’s the whole point of the class is nothing is perfect. Nobody needs to be perfect. We’re just going to have fun and collaborate and play games together.”

Geriatric and long-term care social worker, Jill Spector, has been serving a population with high morbidity all through the pandemic as a frontline health worker.

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