

## Express yourself!



In the days of our childhood, summer was a time to let your creativity break free. The good news? Expressive Arts Florida Institute is keeping that thrill alive this summer with a host of expressive arts workshops. Practicing artists can take their skills to the next level; artists who are out of practice can reconnect with the joy of art-making. Either way, you'll explore

new techniques —and have fun in the process. A great place to start is its “Open Studio,” every Wednesday (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.). This open group forum invites creative individuals to bring in their works in progress — and bring them to completion in a supportive space. Use the studio's supplies or bring your own. A creative spirit is all you'll really need. Drop in when you can — spontaneity is allowed! 200 S. Washington Blvd., Suite 1, Sarasota; 941-366-9595; expressiveartsflorida.com.

## Consciousness raising



Conscious Co-op SRQ is a new group in town whose aim is to appeal to “conscientious people who care about the environment,” according to spokesperson Michele D'Ambrosio. “We're looking to partner with people who want to live a healthy lifestyle with ethical sustainable values and who provide services and products that empower others.” D'Ambrosio, who is a personal life coach, started a similar group in Boca Raton. “We raise

awareness among like-minded individuals who want to use their unique offerings and skills to change the world,” she says. “The intention is to identify values and harness support within the community by connecting with professionals, individuals and businesses. Community is a powerful energy and tool. When we come together to share concerns, learn new trends and meet as neighbors, we all flourish.” Intrigued? D'Ambrosio invites readers to a farm-to-table luncheon, Thursday, Aug. 30, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Art Ovation Hotel, 1255 N. Palm Ave., Sarasota. RSVP at 941-312-5215; Micheleoriginal57@gmail.com.

## Audrey Oxenhorn Social worker

Audrey Oxenhorn is a licensed clinical social worker who works with individuals and families to help them “lovingly create peace and happiness in their lives.” She uses a colorful toolbox of creative therapeutic techniques, including art, mindfulness meditation, hypnotherapy, Emotional Freedom Technique, personalized healing movement and breath exercises. For more information, visit [audreyoxenhorn.com](http://audreyoxenhorn.com).



### How do you use art in your work?

Besides the office walls that display my original art, I work with clients doing collage, drawing and painting. I like to work with multiple modalities including talking, creative art, movement and music, since this facilitates and speeds the healing process.

### You mention that you value boredom. Can you expound on that?

We have a habit of over-scheduling ourselves and our kids, and we forget to allow the moments of silence and boredom. Our true wisdom is heard in the pauses. We've allowed technology to reduce our attention span and it is time to reclaim it. We can't ask our children to disconnect if we are not able to put our own devices down. Boredom is precious time.

### One of the things you offer is to help people remember their passions before they were 7. How does this help us open up to a fuller life?

Before we were 7, we entertained ourselves easily. We chose toys, books, movies and games that we loved and that had not been prescribed by the outer world. As we got older that changed. Those early passions may be a source of happiness as we grow older. If we loved to write, then perhaps it is time to write that novel.

### One of the many techniques you use is Emotional Freedom Technique. Can you briefly tell us what this is and who it can help?

Emotional Freedom Technique or tapping has been around since the early 1990s. It is a powerful technique to move through stuck or trapped emotions and physical pain by tapping on a prescribed series of acupuncture points while speaking our truth. It is very effective with many health and mental health challenges.

### You also use personalized meditations to address issues of smoking cessation, insomnia, overeating, fear of flying and other issues. How does this work?

Many of our challenges are simply unhealthy habits and beliefs that we have followed for years. Hypnosis allows the neurological pathways to shift and create new healthier reactions to our fears and anxieties. It takes about 21 days of following new habits to create permanent changes in our behaviors.

### You say you want to make therapy fun. How do you do that?

Often, the sessions are spontaneously created to accommodate the client's current and long-term goals. I have found that everyone is different, and that EFT might work for one person one day and the next time we might simply draw. We are all unique, creative, powerful people who need a safe and creative place to reclaim our power and passion.