

# Self ARTIST GUIDE Care

Creating a Culture of Self-Care in the Arts

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Dear Artist,

**“This above all: To thine own self be true...”**

This is more than just a famous line from William Shakespeare’s Hamlet. These words are powerful. When we shift caring for ourselves from an idea into an action, we start to experience true happiness.

This is not just some kind of self-help jargon. You, my fellow artist, creator, one who invokes change, one who unites. Before you think about what the world needs. *You need to ask yourself, what do I need?*

The Artist Self-Care Guide (ASCG) believes in radical transformation through radical self-care. Radical defined as fundamental, basic, primary, original, essential, supporting, and important. As a fellow artist, I am vested in making sure you get what you need by guiding you, step-by-step, along your unique journey towards self-(re)discovery.

My vision is to institute a community of radical self-care, a safe space to explore emotional and mental health, and our particular needs as artists. It’s critical to normalize our lived experiences, remove stigmas around mental conditions, and begin to establish a daily practice of self-care. Are you ready to make a radical shift to live in your full power? Is this your season to develop your mental strength and fortitude? Are. You. Ready? It’s time to stop allowing outside situations or circumstances keep you from seeing the value in the life you are living today. Let us be bold and fearless as we create lives filled with inner wealth and absolute happiness.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kehinde Koyejo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Kehinde Koyejo

*“I learned the importance in taking care of myself.”*

*- ASCG Participant*

## Self-Care

Self-care is not a trend. Self-care is a habit, a belief, a value system, a lifestyle. We consistently work to improve our craft as industry professionals. We must also put the same amount of time and effort into taking care of our emotional and mental health. Stress and trauma are unavoidable in this crazy and challenging world. We are impacted by many situations that are out of our control. However, with the right information, tools, strategies, and support, artists can live happy, fulfilled, grounded lives – even under extreme pressure. Through the ASCG, artists gain a wealth of tactics that will support mental and emotional health and develop the mental strength needed to maintain a healthy balance while working in creative industries.

In 2013 I lost my sister, Aisha Medina Grimes, to an accidental overdose of antidepressants. Her death flipped my life upside down, and forced me to confront my deep mental and emotional distress. I made the choice to use this tragedy to help myself, and others just like me, even though my journey to self-healing and self-discovery began in a time of deep pain.

Artists make art for many reasons, but the most critical reason most of us are artists is that we want to live fully. So why are so many of us dying? The statistics are frightening. Various studies over the last 10 years suggest that American artists have a 125% higher risk of suicide than non-artists, and that worldwide, people in the arts are 4 times more likely to kill themselves than people in other professions. According



to NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness, a respected national expert in mental health, approximately 43.8 million people – 1 in 4 adults– experience mental illness in a given year. If we don't start taking our mental and emotional health more seriously, both individually and collectively, artists will continue to lose their lives.

Today, I have the tools I need to protect my whole self: mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Through years of practice, study, and faith I have experienced the power of radical self-care, and seen first-hand how it has helped countless artists experience authentic happiness and success. If I had possessed the ASCG tools earlier in my career, I would have made different choices. I would not have wasted valuable time worrying about situations that were out of my control. Instead of trying to be a star, or make millions, or book every job (all rooted in my need for external validation), I would have focused on the aspects of my life that I did control, like being prepared for emotional triggers and crises, building mental strength, setting realistic goals, and most importantly, having the tools, knowledge, and support to heal myself.



*“ASCG gave me specific tools to use when I am overwhelmed and stressed.”*

*-ASCG Participant*

## From Experience

Kehinde Koyejo is the founder of the Artist Self-Care Guide (ASCG), helping artists manage daily emotional and mental stress by implementing a lifestyle of radical self-care. Kehinde believes that every artist's life is of great value. She is committed to educating artists about mental and emotional health in deep, authentic, and ongoing ways so as to guide more artists towards self-healing.

Kehinde was called to this work after losing her sister to an accidental overdose at a time when a wave of celebrity artists also died by suicide or overdose. In addition to founding ASCG, Kehinde is a flower essence practitioner with certification in mental health first aid, and is a strong survivor with years of lived experience.

A professional artist, Kehinde has been earning her living as an actor for over fifteen years, and continues to perform both in the United States and abroad. She is an associate artist with the Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience (BACCE) in San Francisco, and a member of SAG-AFTRA and the Actor's Equity Association. Kehinde holds a BFA in Acting from Pace University, and a Masters in Performance Studies from NYU.

Kehinde has had the honor of working with theater companies, health advocates, colleges, and a diversity of student and professional artists. Through her workshops, trainings and personal guidance, Kehinde has witnessed major shifts in her clients' behavior, as well as their ability to manage depression, stress, anxiety, and self-defeating thoughts.

**\*\* Ms. Koyejo does not diagnose or prescribe medication. If you have any pre-existing health conditions please consult your doctor before taking any ASCG suggested remedies.**

# A Relaxed Approach

## Vision

The Artist Self-Care Guide seeks to forefront a dynamic culture of radical self-care among all artists from all backgrounds both in the US and abroad.

## Mission

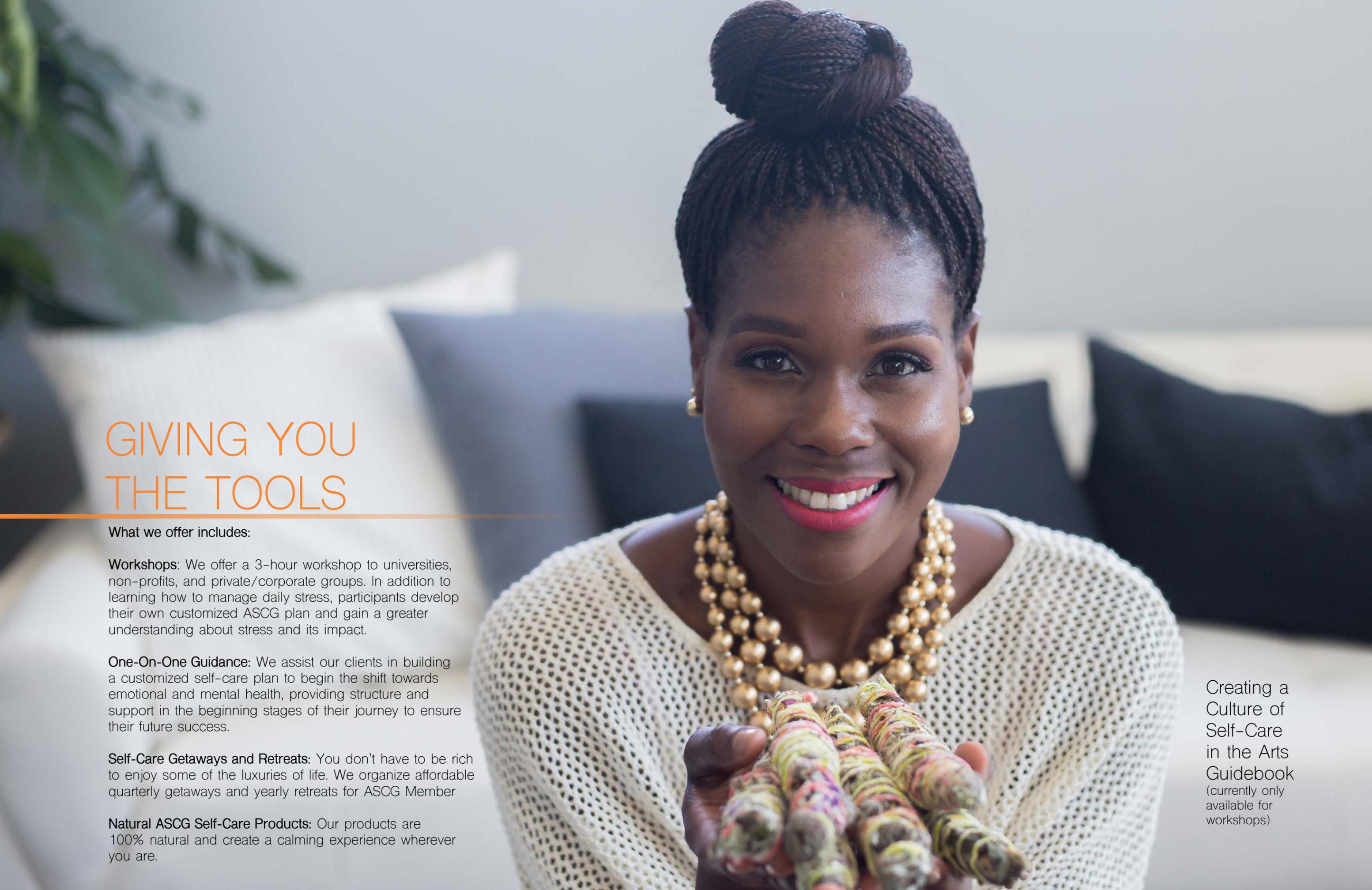
The Artist Self-Care Guide believes that artists lives are of great value, and aims to decrease the number of artists who lose their lives to addiction, overdose, and suicide. Our mission is to empower artists with safe and effective tools and strategies for managing daily mental and emotional stress. With our guidance, every artist will learn how to develop mental strength and build a customized, self-care toolbox designed to meet their individual needs.

## We value:

- Creativity
- Empathy
- Healing
- Humanity
- Practicality
- Community
- Knowledge

Kehinde brings over 15 years of experience in mental health awareness, holistic healing, and personal guidance. Both a guide and a facilitator, Kehinde empowers clients long after the sessions are complete.





# GIVING YOU THE TOOLS

What we offer includes:

**Workshops:** We offer a 3-hour workshop to universities, non-profits, and private/corporate groups. In addition to learning how to manage daily stress, participants develop their own customized ASCG plan and gain a greater understanding about stress and its impact.

**One-On-One Guidance:** We assist our clients in building a customized self-care plan to begin the shift towards emotional and mental health, providing structure and support in the beginning stages of their journey to ensure their future success.

**Self-Care Getaways and Retreats:** You don't have to be rich to enjoy some of the luxuries of life. We organize affordable quarterly getaways and yearly retreats for ASCG Member

**Natural ASCG Self-Care Products:** Our products are 100% natural and create a calming experience wherever you are.

Creating a  
Culture of  
Self-Care  
in the Arts  
Guidebook  
(currently only  
available for  
workshops)



*“Amazing information and amazing space for artists trying to heal, shine, and thrive.”*

*-ASCG Participant*

## WE'VE GUIDED

In addition to providing guidance to individuals, Kehinde has implemented institutional changes in a range of organizations and companies such as:

- College to Career Acting
- Pace University
- The Flight Deck
- Ragged Wing
- SAG-AFTRA Conservatory
- Gritty City Repertory Youth Theater
- Healthier Futures





I want to  
hear from  
you.

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