



ARTS FOR HEALTH

MAGIC



RICHARD WISEMAN

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Series Editor: Paul Crawford, Professor of Health Humanities, University of Nottingham, UK

The *Arts for Health* series offers a ground-breaking set of books that guide the general public, carers, and healthcare providers on how different arts can help people to stay healthy or improve their health and wellbeing.

Bringing together new information and resources underpinning the health humanities (that link health and social care disciplines with the arts and humanities), the books demonstrate the ways in which the arts offer people worldwide a kind of shadow health service – a non-clinical way to maintain or improve our health and wellbeing. The books are aimed at general readers along with interested arts’ practitioners seeking to explore the health benefits of their work, health and social care providers and clinicians wishing to learn about the application of the arts for health, educators in arts, health and social care and organisations, carers and individuals engaged in public health or generating healthier environments. These easy-to-read, engaging short books help readers to understand the evidence about the value of arts for health and offer guidelines, case studies, and resources to make use of these non-clinical routes to a better life.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

To Rex

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Richard Wiseman holds Britain's only Professorship in the Public Understanding of Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire. He has published more than 100 academic papers, including those examining the psychology of magic, illusion, deception, luck, and self-development. He has also written popular psychology books that have sold over 3 million copies (including *The Luck Factor* and *59 Seconds*) and created illusion-based YouTube videos that have attracted more than 600 million views. He regularly gives keynote talks, is one of the most followed psychologists on Twitter, and the *Independent on Sunday* chose him as one of the top 100 people who make Britain a better place to live. Richard is a Member of the Inner Magic Circle, and acts as a creative consultant for high-profile stage and television projects. He was recently awarded the prestigious Golden Grolla Award for his work into psychology and illusion, and has been described by Elizabeth Loftus (Past President, Association for Psychological Science) as 'one of the world's most creative psychologists'.

FOREWORD: CREATIVE PUBLIC HEALTH

The 'Arts for Health' series aims to provide key information on how different arts and humanities practices can support, or even transform, health and wellbeing. Each book introduces a particular creative activity or resource and outlines its place and value in society, the evidence for its use in advancing health and wellbeing, and cases of how this works. In addition, each book provides useful links and suggestions to readers for following-up on these quick reads. We can think of this series as a kind of shadow health service – encouraging the use of the arts and humanities alongside all the other resources on offer to keep us fit and well.

Creative practices in the arts and humanities offer a fantastic, non-medical, but medically relevant way to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities. Intuitively, we know just how important creative activities are in maintaining or recovering our best possible lives. For example, imagine that we woke up tomorrow to find that all music, books, or films had to be destroyed, learn that singing, dancing, or theatre had been outlawed or that galleries, museums, and theatres had to close permanently; or, indeed, that every street had posters warning citizens of severe punishment for taking photographs, drawing, or writing. How would we feel? What would happen to our bodies and minds? How would we survive? Unfortunately, we have seen this kind of removal of creative activities from human society before and today many people remain terribly restricted in artistic expression and consumption.

I hope that this series adds a practical resource to the public. I hope people buy these little books as gifts for family and friends,

or for hard-pressed healthcare professionals, to encourage them to revisit or to consider a creative path to living well. I hope that creative public health makes for a brighter future.

Professor Paul Crawford

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