

Covid 19 response programme: October 2020 update

In July 2020, we launched RE:SET, our Arts Council England Emergency Response Fund-supported virtual action learning programme for creative freelancers, artists and other creative entrepreneurs in England.



Through RE:SET, we've set up a series of virtual action learning sets (think of a 'set' as a peer coaching group and you have the right idea) for artists and creative freelancers and entrepreneurs. Each 'set' brings together 8 individuals, who are working together to help each other explore their challenges, opportunities and dilemmas and unlock new insights.

To date, we've run 42 half or full day action learning sessions, and supported 64 individuals, from theatre makers, writers and musicians to technicians, producers and curators. Based on application details, we estimate that 13% of participants come from minority ethnic backgrounds.

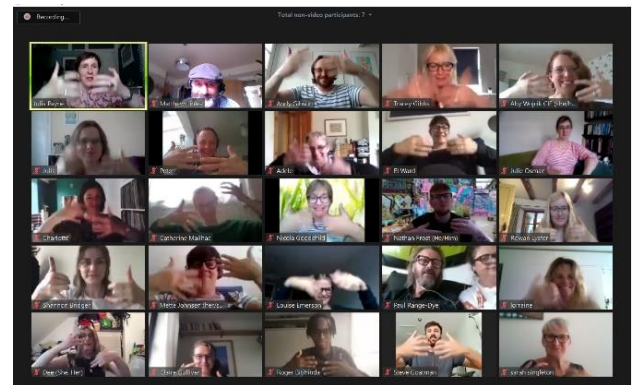
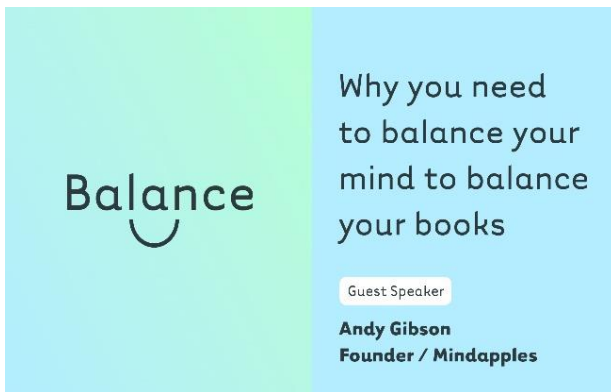
As part of a process review of each session, participants are asked to share their thoughts on the impact participating has had. Here are a few examples of feedback they've shared so far...

"I found it super helpful to be asked all those questions I've been feeling unable to pin down let alone answer... I feel really lucky to be part of Re:Set & in the particular set I'm in. It's such a great set of mixed expertises, ages & life approaches. I've had a couple of 1-1 coaching chats, but somehow this is more impactful. I definitely plan to set up some sets myself so I can help other people help each other & I hope to continue with my set post October!"

I find this way of learning really suits me. It's about talking your way through the problems into a solution, with the rest of the group guiding you. It feels really supportive. I think the range of people in the group is really helpful. Everyone is bringing a slightly different approach to the challenge, so it directs you in new directions.

I'd been spending a lot of time rolling certain aspects over and over in my head & losing sight of the bigger picture. Presenting really helped me to lay out everything mentally & make connections between aspects of my current situation & dilemmas.

The session really stuck with me. The idea that I need to think about my values...I hadn't realized how important this could be as a starting point for our next phase as a business. The other thing that it helped with was a little bit of confidence... So all in all, very useful.



In May 2020 we launched our Balance talk and drop in series, in partnership with [Mindapples](#) and the [Creative Industries Federation](#), with a micro-grant from Colchester Borough Council and [South East Creatives](#). Balance was designed to help fellow artists, freelancers and creative entrepreneurs balance their minds and their books, and put protecting their mental health top of their to do list.

Our [first session](#) explored exactly why we need to balance our minds if we want to balance our books. Our [July talk](#) provided insights about dealing with anxiety, stress, overwhelm and uncertainty at a time of seismic change. Our August [insights into staying motivated, identifying what matters and finding the right path](#) were there to help people **re-discover their purpose and energy**. In September, our [session on creative thinking and productivity](#) helped those for whom the past 6 months have taken their toll on their supplies of creativity and ingenuity. Our latest talk, earlier this month, explored how to embrace change and retain a sense of identity when in professional flux.

To date, **600+ individuals – artists, producers, directors and label managers amongst them – have taken part in our monthly talks and drop in sessions, joining from Colchester to Crewe, Bradford to Bristol and Margate to Middlesbrough.** Every month, we encourage **participants to share their experiences and insights, and the response has been so positive.** At each talk, we **crowdsource** a treasure trove of tips, good reads and top listens, covering everything from ideas for coping with uncertainty and boosting creative thinking to a brilliant list of business planning questions, all of which we share more widely via blogs and socials.

At a time when so many feel isolated, under-valued and uncertain even what tense to use about what they do for a it's been lovely to see a sense of community emerge. Here's just a sample of the feedback we've had:

I love listening to Julia and Andy from Mind Apples in conversation, they help you feel included and relevant as opposed to isolated and irrelevant.

I regularly attend the Balance talks. I've watched them all so far, whether live or the recorded version. I like them because they specifically cater for creative entrepreneurs. It's really beneficial to have a regular check-up with like-minded people, to motivate myself to carry on...watching all of them is good because each one builds on the others.

I loved the uncertain futures session...the energy to it & being able to participate. I have written some small things I can control & help with a daily rhythm that I have stuck to since then. 'Purpose helps you pivot' was timely & I've written this large on my wall! So thank you. I'd have done none of this had it not been for the space to think and listen and see commonalities in the chat. The boost I had from it is still lasting and also the reassurance in so many people are feeling the same.

Supportive, full of easy ideas to stay sane and a comfort to be with artists in a similar position.



**WORLD
MENTAL
HEALTH DAY**
10TH OCTOBER 2020

Produced by



It was World Mental Health Day on 10 October, and to mark it we put together a [Balance OneDayer](#), designed to help artists and creative freelancers take better care of their minds, and delivered in partnership with [Mindapples](#) and the [Creative Industries Federation](#).

This one day event included: a new Balance talk, exploring how to embrace change; 1-1 coaching sessions; a writing for wellbeing workshop, 2 laughter yoga workshops, plus a living room to round the day off. All of the event were entirely free; this day of events was a gift to our peers, built using what we know and have to share, with each session being led for free by a member of the hub team. Across the day, just under 200 artists and creative freelancers attended one or more of our OneDayer events.

Here's some of the feedback we've had...

Thank you so much Julia. I came away from the day feeling part of a greater community of artists, fizzing with ideas and possibilities and most importantly, I came away with hope.

I just wanted to say thank you for a brilliant day. The talk this morning was interesting and gave food for thought, I loved being in the Balance workshop - I really felt I was contributing and being valuable, using my expertise. And to top it off your zoom disco was ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT...lovely atmosphere, great people & fantastic for the mind, body and spirit. So pleased to have been a part of it today and well done you, and your team - loving your work

Huge thanks for Saturday's session - I was feeling very tired so not fully able to engage, but it was a lovely laid back session and I really appreciate what you are doing for us all.



For further information about the hub, and any of these projects, please contact Julia Payne:
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