

Congratulations on your acceptance to Banff Centre!

Residencies and programs at Banff Centre can be a transformative experience for art practice, personal and professional goals, perspective and often identity. This overall experience can be celebratory and exciting; at the same time, it can challenge your resilience and well-being.

We encourage you to consider how you will come prepared and well to help you fully participate in your program for a rewarding and impactful time. Based on our experience, it is helpful to reflect on the tools and strategies you employ at home to maintain your well-being that can transition to your stay at Banff Centre where you'll be away from your support networks and usual self-care practices. Also think through the actions you can take when you recognize signs of increasing stress and anxiety to address and diffuse the challenges you may encounter (ex. disrupted daily routine/practices, intense program including pace and/or challenging materials, managing expectations of self and others).

Use the suggestions below to guide this self-reflection:

Before you leave

- reflect on the support systems, network and self-care strategies you employ to feel centered, calm and on top of things at home (physical exercise, socialization, cooking, alone time, music/video games, gathering with family and friends, regular sleep, healthy food) and how those strategies can be recreated at Banff Centre
- manage expectations of your program, work to be accomplished, Banff Centre facilities and faculty; experiment with setting goals while being flexible and open to the various possibilities your experience at Banff Centre may hold.
- research resources and services available at Banff Centre that align with interests and self-care practices you can engage i.e. climbing gym, hiking trails, yoga classes, mindfulness programming
- think about your daily routine and how that may be disrupted in a hotel environment (ex. spiritual practices, morning stretches, late night working) and how they may be adjusted or impacted
- pack items that bring you comfort- e.g., a specific book, article of clothing, music
- reflect on your "pressure points"- things that increase your levels of stress, discomfort, and/or frustration. How can you anticipate them here? How will you address and de-escalate them?

During your stay

- set aside time to regularly check in with loved ones/friends/supports at home to ground yourself, to share experiences
- establish a daily routine early on with some flexibility built in to take in events, activities and outings on offer and connect with others, being mindful of when you need time for rest and helpful time alone.
- monitor how you are doing and check in with Participant Resources if you require support, resources or services to bolster your mental health

When you return home

- take time to reflect on your experience and what you most want to take away from it to incorporate into your practice and your day-to-day
- consider reaching out to connections you made at Banff Centre to share experiences and to support each other for goals set within the program
- think about how you will balance your 'home' routine and obligations with the transformations and discovery you experienced while away