Caracol (Carole Facal) created the following *Project Field Notes* in 2025 as part of her Balancing Act Level UP! Pilot Project.

Please credit Caracol and Balancing Act if you use, cite, or share information from this resource.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these materials, please contact Balancing Act at info@balancingactcanada.com.

Caracol's Level UP! Project
Sound Therapy & Creativity Retreat for Artist-Caregivers
Project Field Notes

The following field notes were written by Carole Facal (aka Caracol) in 2025 as a reflection on her Level UP! Pilot Project.

Project focus: My project centered on organizing a two-day Sound Therapy and Creativity Retreat for artist-caregivers who are actively involved in the music industry.

Project inspiration: This project was inspired by my healing journey after a serious medical episode and the powerful role that sound therapy played in it.

Context and Background

After experiencing a serious medical episode in 2023 that forced me to pause all professional activity for a year, I came to realize how much stress artists are under—and how little support exists for mental and physical wellness. During this time, I discovered sound therapy, which became a key tool in helping me recover and ultimately led me to pursue formal training through the British Academy of Sound Therapy. I also experienced the transformative power of retreats—spaces to learn and integrate new tools for wellness. I decided to link the two together and create a sound therapy and creativity retreat! My goal was to support our vulnerable music community—specifically women artist-caregivers. I also wanted to bring greater awareness of sound therapy within the artistic community.

Planning and Implementation

The retreat took place the first weekend in May 2025, in Montebello, Quebec. It was a Sound Therapy and Creativity Retreat for artist-caregivers in the music industry and took place over two days and one night.

I organized everything myself—from finding the location and promoting the event, to hiring a caterer and photographer, building a webpage to share information with attendees, drafting consent forms, and designing all the workshops. I received helpful

guidance from Balancing Act and the British Academy of Sound Therapy throughout the process.

Planning began the moment I was accepted into the Level UP! Project. I had never organized a retreat before, so it was a huge undertaking—but also incredibly rewarding. The planning process was ongoing from the start and continued right up until the event in early May. I was constantly fine-tuning things along the way, for example, adjusting the activities and schedule to decide how much time to spend on each part, discussing and revising the catering menu with the cook, trying to figure out how to split the rooms between participants, organizing car-sharing to get there, and planning out materials needed for creative activities. On the sound therapy side, I had to design my sound sessions, decide how I was going to approach them, what the content would be, and plan which instruments were needed and how to transport them. There were a lot more tiny details than I would've imagined!

I promoted the retreat by email, social media, and through conversation. Seven artist-caregivers joined the retreat. This included a professional photographer who documented the event and a cook/caterer—both of whom participated. I facilitated the sessions and offered sound therapy throughout the weekend.

There was a lot of learning along the way—professionally and personally. I grew as a sound therapist, a retreat facilitator, and in managing the many administrative aspects of the project.

Aside from my time, the following were critical to the success of the project:

1. Funding: to make the pilot possible, build documentation for future editions, and keep it financially accessible; and
2. Legal/administrative guidance: for creating waivers, consent forms, and the website.

Thankfully, I received support in both areas from Balancing Act, which truly made the project possible.

Before the retreat, I set up a WhatsApp group so we could get to know each other and create excitement about the project. Afterward, the group stayed active, and we continue to share thoughts and conversations. Several of the participants are people I already

knew from the music industry—and our relationships have definitely climbed to a new level through this experience.

Key Conversations

A number of key conversations came up among retreat participants and during the planning process.

A recurring theme was the obvious lack of support and resources available to artists when it comes to wellness, physical health, and mental health. For those who are also caregivers, the challenges are even greater. We spoke about how stress-related issues often go unaddressed simply because artists often don't have the financial means to access care. Many of us work in an environment where anxiety and the pressure to meet unrealistic expectations have become the norm. Sustaining a long-term career in the music industry is already tough—and for women, it's even harder.

Another thing that came up was how sound therapy is still relatively unknown, especially in the pop music world. People were curious and open, but it's clear there's a lot of room to raise awareness around this modality within our circles.

Everyone agreed on the urgency of these issues. The real challenge, though, is carving out the time, financial support, and human resources needed to address them—especially in an industry where our work has been largely de-monetized, and where artists are expected to juggle multiple roles. For caregivers, those pressures are even more intense.

Language

Language played a meaningful role throughout this project, both in how I communicated information and in the conversations that unfolded during the retreat itself.

From the beginning, I was careful to consistently use inclusive language and to highlight the values that are important to me: respect, responsibility, communication, safety, support, and creativity. Originally, I had planned to open the pilot to artists of all genders. But after securing the chalet and seeing that participants would be sharing rooms, I decided to keep this first edition for women only. I wanted everyone to feel safe, secure, and comfortable.

Sustainability

I believe this project could become sustainable if I focus more on marketing to a wider audience. The music business in Quebec is such a small ecosystem, so one idea would be to open it up to other artistic communities. I could also explore offering it in different provinces.

To make this a regular part of my seasonal activities, I would need partners! Especially to help fund the project. That kind of support is essential if I want to keep it accessible to the artists who need it the most: the ones with limited financial resources.

Future Planning

If I were to do this again—which I hope and believe I will!—there are a few things I'd like to improve or expand:

- Extend the retreat to three days and two nights.
- Ideally, find a larger chalet with private rooms for everyone, plus a separate room for sound therapy sessions.
- Refine the schedule a little.
- A longer format would allow for more free time, which I think would help with integration and rest.
- If the number of participants increases, I would definitely bring in a qualified assistant.

I found that the two day retreat went by really fast and I had to cancel one activity because I felt it would have been too rushed to include it. I believe that extending the length of future retreats to three days would make a world of difference. I would adjust the schedule accordingly, making a little bit more space for free creative time and solo time.

I am actively speaking with SPACQ-AE (Société professionnelle des auteurs, compositeurs du Québec et des artistes entrepreneurs) and CPPA (Centre psychologique pour artistes) about organizing sound therapy retreats and projects in 2026. I am also pursuing a career as a sound therapist in parallel to my music career, and it's bringing many exciting projects and opportunities.

Other Thoughts

For anyone considering a similar initiative, here's some advice: Make sure you have someone on site who knows how to support people with emotionally challenging situations, like anxiety attacks or emotional responses related to grief. Also, make sure someone has a valid First Aid certification, just in case there's a physical emergency.