



**FILE 10 · THE PERSON**

# **Mental Health & Wellness.**

The work is hard. Real resources for staying alive in it — the Actors Fund, sliding-scale therapy, peer groups, recovery.

**NEPA·PRO TALENT**

talent.nepa-pro.com · 570-677-7971

# The work is hard. Take care of yourself.

*Acting is a profession of repeated, public, semi-anonymous rejection. The bookings are sparse, the comparisons are constant, and the financial stress is real. Burnout, anxiety, depression, and substance issues are common and treatable. Below: the resources actors actually use.*

---

*If you are in crisis right now: call or text 988 (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) or text HELLO to 741741 (Crisis Text Line). Both are free, confidential, and 24/7. NYC Well at 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355) is the city's mental health support line.*

---

---

## THE ACTORS FUND (NOW “ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNITY FUND”)

---

### Entertainment Community Fund

entertainmentcommunity.org · 729 7th Ave, 11th Floor · 212-221-7300

Formerly The Actors Fund. The single most important safety-net organization for entertainment professionals in the U.S. They are not a foundation that gives one-time gifts — they are a long-running social services agency.

Programs (verify currents on their site):

- Emergency financial assistance — help with rent, medical, utilities for entertainment workers facing crisis
- Health insurance navigation — counselors who help you find and qualify for affordable health coverage
- Affordable housing — the Schermerhorn (Brooklyn), the Aurora (Manhattan), and other Fund-owned buildings with reduced-rent units for industry professionals
- The Friedman Health Center — free or sliding-scale primary medical care for industry professionals (in NYC; also in LA)
- Counseling services — free short-term therapy for industry workers
- Career development — transition coaching when you need to step back from performing
- Senior care services

Eligibility: entertainment professionals can typically access services after some documented working time in the industry; they're generous in defining this. Just call.

---

## ACTOR-SPECIFIC THERAPY

---

Many NYC therapists specialize in performers and creatives. They understand the unique stressors of the work: rejection cycles, identity-and-craft fusion, financial uncertainty, performance anxiety.

Resources:

- Entertainment Community Fund counseling (above) — free short-term therapy
- Performing Artists Medicine Association — directory of clinicians familiar with performers
- Open Path Collective ([openpathcollective.org](http://openpathcollective.org)) — nationwide network of therapists offering sessions at \$30 - \$80, with a one-time \$65 membership fee
- NYC Mental Health Service Corps — sliding-scale therapy
- Sliding Scale NYC ([slidingscalenyc.com](http://slidingscalenyc.com)) — therapist directory filtered by sliding-scale availability

---

### ADDICTION & RECOVERY RESOURCES

---

The performing arts have real rates of substance issues. There is no shame in needing help.

- The Actors' Fund (Entertainment Community Fund) Addiction & Recovery programs — treatment navigation and financial assistance for industry professionals
- SAG-AFTRA Foundation Conservatory (for members) — some recovery programming
- NYC Department of Health Addiction Services — 311 or [nyc.gov](http://nyc.gov) for treatment navigation
- SAMHSA National Helpline — 1-800-662-HELP (4357), free, 24/7, multilingual
- AA, NA, SMART Recovery — meetings happen all over NYC, daily, free

---

### PEER GROUPS & COMMUNITY

---

Therapy alone often isn't enough. The actors who stay sane in the long run usually have regular community: peer-support groups, ongoing class, a social circle outside the business.

- Performance anxiety groups — the Entertainment Community Fund hosts these intermittently
- Support groups for women / BIPOC / LGBTQ+ actors — many run quietly through industry organizations; ask in your acting class
- The League of Professional Theatre Women — networking and peer support for women in theater
- The Black Theatre Coalition, Maestra Music, Asian American Performers Action Coalition — identity-specific advocacy and community organizations

---

### PHYSICAL HEALTH ON A FREELANCER'S BUDGET

---

The Actors Fund Friedman Health Center in NYC offers primary care on a sliding scale for industry workers. Vision and dental partnerships exist through the Fund.

NYC Care ([nyccare.nyc](http://nyccare.nyc)) is the city's low-cost or free health-coverage program for residents who don't qualify for federal coverage — and it works regardless of immigration status.

SAG-AFTRA Health Plan and Equity-League Health Trust Fund kick in once you hit earnings thresholds in those unions. They are real, full-coverage health plans — one of the biggest tangible benefits of union membership.

---

### THE 4 PM RULE

---

A small habit working actors swear by: 4 PM is the hard cutoff for industry work each day. After 4 PM, you do not check email. You do not refresh Actors Access. You do not work on self-tapes unless they're due tomorrow. The work has its hours; the rest of life gets the rest.

Sustainable careers come from boundaries. The actor who treats audition life like a 14-hour-a-day obsession burns out faster than the actor who treats it like a job.

*“You can’t book a job you didn’t survive.” The actors who win over decades are the ones who stay alive in the work — financially, emotionally, physically. Take care of the person before you take care of the career.*

#### EMERGENCY CONTACTS — KEEP THESE SOMEWHERE

Resource	Number
Suicide & Crisis Lifeline	988
Crisis Text Line	Text HELLO to 741741
NYC Well	1-888-692-9355
SAMHSA National Helpline	1-800-662-4357
NYC Mental Health Hotline (LifeNet)	1-800-LIFENET (1-800-543-3638)
Entertainment Community Fund	212-221-7300
NYC Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-621-HOPE (4673)
The Trevor Project (LGBTQ+ Youth)	1-866-488-7386
Trans Lifeline	1-877-565-8860