

Ishaa Vinod Chopra
findingorderindisorder@gmail.com
www.findingorderindisorder.com



Ishaa is a Guelph MSc. Candidate in Critical Family and Kinship Studies with an Interdisciplinary focus on Gender, Sexualities and Bodies at the University of Guelph, Canada. She has a Diploma and Honours Degree in Early Childhood Education from George Brown College. She holds a BFA in Indian classical dance, Kathak, and was trained under Guru Pta. Maneesha Sathe and now Prajakta Dravid, founder of the Kathak school Ātmikā in Toronto.

'Finding Order in Disorder', her deeply personal memoir which has received two awards, and two nominations for best memoir globally her deeply personal memoir, explores intersectional themes of lived experiences in mental well-being and being a survivor of intimate partner violence through the medium of expressive arts such as dance therapy, mad poetry, visual arts, and journaling. She has led dance workshops through community arts engagement at Toronto Neighbourhood Organization- TNO, George Brown Polytechnic as an Alumni member of AODA- Accessibility of Ontarians with Disability Act Committee. She developed a course for the Creative Minds programming for individuals with lived experiences in mental health challenges for Workman Arts Satellite programming at North York Arts, Meridian Arts Centre, TO Live.

An artist-scholar, her multidisciplinary art is featured in a York University thesis film 'Unfinished' screened at Workman Arts Organization's Rendezvous with Madness, Stella's Place Mental Health film festivals. Her work has been disseminated at academic conferences such as Children's Mental Health Ontario - CMHO, International Society of Psychosocial Approaches to Mental Health- ISPS-US, Digital Mental Health International Collaborative- eMHIC and Council of Exceptional Children - CEC.

Her writing, inspired by her Supervisor, Dr. Adam W.J. Davies, has appeared in AECEO's eceLINK journal. She is the CEO and Founder Finding Order in Disorder Foundation Non-Profit & Arts Collective that seeks to explore projects such as hybrid podcasts, therapeutic dance and community engagement for mental wellness.

She continues to fundraise, produce documentary films, conceive digital storytelling global projects, host hybrid video podcast titled 'Finding Order in Disorder'. She has also been invited to New York City, Chicago, Victoria, B.C, Dresden, Germany, Mumbai, Pune, Dalhousie (India), and Spain to teach, perform Kathak and Latin dance forms through her commitment to community engagement. This year she celebrates her 3 year Anniversary of officially incorporating her non-profit Finding Order in Disorder. She is in her final year of her Masters Thesis and plans to continue her research in Gender, Women's Studies, Disability and Social Justice to apply it to both the non-profit sector as well as disseminate her research projects at conferences and within global academic journals and scholarship.

Ishaa Vinod Chopra, Author, RECE, she/her ([Why are these here?](#)) | ([listen here](#))
Guelph MSc. Thesis Candidate | Artist ~ 'Ishaa Improv' | Podcast Host
Founder Finding Order in Disorder Non Profit & Arts Collective
Critical Kinship & Family Studies (FRAN) X Sexualities, Genders, and Bodies (SXGN)
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Author | Artist | RECE | MSc. Candidate | Non-Profit & Arts Collective ~ Finding Order in Disorder

BIO:

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EDUCATION:

Sep 2024 – Present	MSc. Family Relations and Applied Nutrition – Critical Kinship and Family Studies Thesis – University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, Canada
Sep 2020 – Sep 2024	Honours Bachelor of Early Childhood Education Degree George Brown College, Toronto, ON, Canada
Sep 2019 - Dec 2022	Early Childhood Education Diploma George Brown College, Toronto, ON, Canada
May 2011 - May 2013	Bachelor of Performing Arts – Indian Classical dance- Kathak- Bharati Vidyapeeth Deemed University, Pune, India

PUBLICATIONS:

2024	<i>'Finding Order in Disorder- A Bipolar Memoir'</i> , Memoir- Non-Fiction, OM Books International, 2024 – formats: Paperback, Kindle, Amazon Audible- Audiobook
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2024 ['Exploring my identity as a 'Mad', BIPOC, Early Childhood Educator & Advocate'](#), eceLINK Journal, Association of Early Childhood Educators (AECEO), 2024

Works from 'Finding Order in Disorder- memoir' cited in **MFA thesis support paper** by Shabnam Sukhdev, titled "Unfinished." York University, September 2021.
<https://yorkspace.library.yorku.ca/xmlui/handle/10315/40591>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATION(S):

ISPS-US Chapter Annual Conference- International Society of Psychosocial Approaches to Mental Health Conference 2025: "Bridging the Divides" – Unfinished Documentary Screening + Discussion

eMHIC- Digital Mental Health International Collaborative Conference 2025 'Global Mental Health Equity: Digital Solutions for an Interconnected World' Unfinished: Finding Order in Disorder Presentation

Virtual Holiday Mental Health Conference & In-person Podcast, NYC– 2025 – Hosted by Rahul Mahajan, Author, Advocate - 'Rah' – aka 'Mr. Trauma Talks'

CMHO (Children's Mental Health Ontario) 'Together for Tomorrow' Conference 2024

"Culturally Relevant Pedagogies: Therapeutic Sound and Movement for Early Years and School-Agers"- ...The second part of the workshop will focus on therapeutic dance and movement using the North Indian Classical Dance form of 'Kathak'.

Learning Objectives

- To gain more insights on the importance of Music and dance therapy.
- To learn about culturally relevant pedagogies such as African Music and Indian Classical and Folk Dance Forms.
- To share and explore their lived experiences with music and dance through engagement with children.
- To build unique teaching tool kits by learning, musical activities that engage children of all cultural backgrounds.
- To encourage educators to create creative curriculum that aligns with the principles of Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (DEI).
- To make educators, families and children of all cultures feel represented and express themselves freely in a safe space.

CMHO 2024 "Like Mother, Like Daughter: Navigating Mental Health Through Connection and Empathy":

Learning Objectives

- Understand the significance of the caregiver's role in providing a stable and nurturing environment.
- Learn ways to overcome stigma by nurturing love and acceptance.
- Foster inclusivity by cultivating understanding and compassion.

- Explore the application of coping mechanisms such as dance, art and yoga in mental well-being.

CEC (Council for Exceptional Children) 68th Annual Special Education Conference, 2024: Therapeutic Music and Dance for Early Childhood and Adolescents

Abstract: This workshop will explore the benefits of Music and Dance Therapy using Indian and African Rhythms and musicality. There will be an underlying link to the positive impacts of these activities on overall Mental Health and Well-being as coping mechanisms while integrating culturally relevant pedagogies in curriculum planning.

SOCIAL JUSTICE FILM PROJECT(S)

2024	Subject, Filmmaker, Choreographer <i>'Ishaa Tänzerin- Dance Therapy Vlogs'</i> - Autobiographical documentary on the power of Dance Therapy for Mental Well-being through powerful lived experiences
2022	Research Associate and Subject: <i>'Unfinished'</i> – Autobiographical account of a daughter's mental health journey through the lens of a caregiver- Screened at Stella's Place <i>'Get Reel'</i> & Workman Arts Organization <i>'Rendezvous with Madness'</i> Mental Health Film Festivals
2004	<i>'Ishaa Journals'</i> - <i>Chronicled Immigrant Youth Experience from India to Canada</i> - Screened at International Association of Women in Radio & Television (IAWRT) Delhi Film Festival- 2018

MENTAL HEALTH PODCAST(S)

KangarooMinds ft. Vedica Podar on Mental Health:

<https://tinyurl.com/KangarooMinds>

'ReviaTrivia' Podcast:

<https://tinyurl.com/RavleenBali>

'Mental Health and a Mother's Love' – 'The Caregiver's Voice' - 'Victory Speaks' Podcast by Advocate Nicole Waldren ft. Shabnam & Ishaa:

<https://tinyurl.com/yc77kpc5>

Kriti Film Club's Discussion on 'Unfinished' Documentary – screened at the online edition of the 3rd Beyond Borders Feminist Film Festival 2022. Unfinished is a 40-minute personal documentary that encapsulates the struggle of a daughter's mental illness as seen through the lens of her mother:

<https://tinyurl.com/2s4efkdw>

Mental Health Week, 2023- Episode 117 ft., Caregiver & filmmaker Shabnam Sukhdev with daughter Ishaa Chopra. They discuss their mental health journey leading to the documentary 'Unfinished' and memoir 'Finding Order in Disorder':

<https://tinyurl.com/ishaavchopra>

Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival- Panel Discussion:

<https://tinyurl.com/WorkManArts>

CHILD ADVOCACY PROJECT

Street Play titled 'Saachi Baath'- The Real Truth, a Musical Production:

Choreographer, Lead Performing Artist

Location: Mumbai, India

<https://tinyurl.com/yw45vn3s>

THERAPEUTIC DANCE FACILITATION:

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| 2025 | GRCCED – Guelph Resource Centre for Gender Empowerment and Diversity – Therapeutic Movement & Dance- A Fusion of Cultures Workshop Facilitator |
| 2024 | International Day for Persons with Disabilities (IDPW)- George Brown College- Waterfront campus- hybrid workshop |
| 2024 | Course Design & Dance Facilitation- Creative Minds - Therapeutic Dance Movement: A Fusion of Cultures - program in partnership with North York Arts, Workman Arts, and TO Live at Meridian Arts Centre – a wellness-based arts program: <i>“Through the means of Cultural Dance Movement and Therapy (Indian, Folk, Latin styles), dance therapy will be explored for the purpose and joy of pursuing a hobby as opposed to merely replicating choreography.”</i> |
| 2024 | Dance + Mental Health Youth Workshop Facilitator- Toronto Neighbourhood Organization (TNO) - Program session focusing on various art forms for youth aged 12-18. Incorporated community safety/mental health and wellness, addressing topics relevant to schools, parks, and public spaces. |

PROFESSIONAL DANCE PERFORMANCES

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| 2025 | Kathak- Indian Classical Dance Duet – Radha & Krishna Bhajan - Maja Apprentice Centre for Arts Theatre |
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- 2025 **Workman Arts Organization – Member Showcase**
Solo Indian Classical Kathak Improv Dance Drama rooted in Mad activism and Disability Justice
- 2024 **Toes for Dance** 'COMMON GROUND DANCE FESTIVAL' - 'Damru Naad'- Creation of the World portraying Elements- a Kathak Classical Dance Performance, location: Lee Lifeson Arts Park- North York, Toronto- *Kathak Dance Artist*
- 2022 **Workman Arts Organization - Member Showcase**
Solo Kathak Dance Recital

FIELD PRACTICUM

- Sept – Dec 2025 **Guelph University Graduate Teaching Assistant**
w/Professor Dr. Susan Chuang- FRAN- Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition
Skills: Graded projects, facilitated online discussions, and gave guest lectures for a class of 500 students.
- June – Sept. 2024 **Bachelor's Research Internship w/ Dr. Adam W.J Davies-**
Professor, University of Guelph
Skills: Early Childhood Education · Communication · Research · Writing · Creative Writing · Social Media Marketing · Mental Health Advocacy · Interpersonal Communication
- March-April 2023 **Curriculum Leadership Lab Days, Preschool, Bachelors**
Richmond and Adelaide Child Care Centre, Toronto, ON
- March-May 2021 **Field Placement, Preschool**
Rose Avenue Child Care Centre, Toronto, ON
- Oct. - Jan. 2019 **Field Placement, Infant**
Jesse Ketchum Early Childhood Learning Centre, Toronto, ON

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 2024 **Research Internship with Dr. Adam W.J Davies** focusing on Early Childhood Educators & Mental Health- Literature Review, eceLINK article, Mental Health Video Podcast shot at U of Guelph, collab with AECEO for Instagram Post, Student Blog – part of ECE Degree at George Brown College- School of Early Childhood
- Oct 2024 – Present **Founder, Executive Director-**

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Oct 2024 – Present	Podcast Host- Finding Order in Disorder
Oct 2023 – Present	Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario (AECEO) – on-call Facilitator (ECE Book Club/Mindfulness)
July 2023 – Present	RECE Supply Staff- Preschool/Kindergarten Bowmore Childcare and Enrichment Centre, Toronto, ON
May 2023 – Aug 2023	Summer RECE Supply Staff- School-Age Red Apple Day Care, Toronto, ON
Aug 2022 – Nov 2022	RECE Supply Staff YMCA of Greater Toronto, Toronto, ON
Feb 2022 – July 2022	RECE Discovery Place-EDU Kids, Pickering, ON RECE staff for the toddler room.
2019 – 2020	Educator and at home care for child with Special Needs In Scarborough, ON
Dec 2016 – Dec 2019	Hostel In-charge, Art/Games/Dance Teacher, Early Childhood Educator Dalhousie Public School (DPS), Dalhousie, Himachal Pradesh, India
2014 – 2015	Latin/Swing Dance Instructor- Gymnasium Dresden-Plauen Girls High School · Dresden, Saxony, Germany: Instructed the 7th and 8th grade classes and taught them Swing dance, which they performed in front of the school and for a city of Dresden project
2014 – 2015	Salsa Dance Instructor- Dresden International University Taught University students and Community members Latin Dance as part of the City of Dresden Community Project Skills: Latin Dance · Dance Instruction · Cross-Cultural Communication · Argentine Tango · Childcare · Communication · Choreography

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

2024-25	Accessibility Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Sub-Committee Student Co-Chair - George Brown College
2024	Toronto Writer's Union of Canada- Ontario Region Open Mic Presenter

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- 2024 **Therapeutic Dance Facilitator at** School of Early Childhood, GBC, TMU Campus for Early Childhood Educators
- 2024 **Therapeutic Dance Facilitator for International Day of Persons with Disabilities Day-** *GBC Waterfront Campus – live + online-* Hosted by OAERHS, George Brown College
- 2024 **Workman Arts & North York Arts Member Artist-** Course Facilitator for Creative Minds Program- Therapeutic Dance: A Fusion of Cultures
- 2024 **Author of a Memoir: “Finding Order in Disorder”:** Chopra I.V (2024) *Finding Order in Disorder-* OM Books International Publications
- 2024 **GBC Student Panelist** for *#AccessibilityAwarenessWeek*
- 2022 **Research Study Participant**
Let’s Talk About Race Project, George Brown College
- 2019 **Research Associate** for Master’s Thesis Documentary titled “*Unfinished*” on Mental Health - screened at Stella’s Place,’ Reel Abilities’ & Workman Arts Organization ‘Rendezvous with Madness’ Mental Health Film Festival (s)
- 2015 **Participant and Choreographer** of a Musical Street Performance titled “*Saachi Baath*” or “*Truth*” in Mumbai, India, on the topic of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Awareness

PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

- Dec 2019- Present **Registered Early Childhood Educator- College of Early Childhood Educators – Ontario, Canada**
- Jan 2024 **Mental Health First Aid Certificate, Canada**
Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences
- March 2022 **Standard First Aid CPR C + AED**
RESCUE7, TIME MASH E.M.S, Expires March 5/25
- Oct 2016 **Yoga Teacher Training Certificate**
The Yoga Institute, Mumbai, India
- March 2014 **ZUMBA Intensive Teacher’s Course**
Zumba Training Program, Pune, India

TRAINING/WORKSHOPS

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May	2024	Annual Virtual International Student Summit
April	2024	GBC International Student Mental Health
Jan	2023	George Brown Annual Mental Health Conference
Oct	2023	Early Childhood Conference Certificate of Participation: Together, we are stronger: a day to come together to learn and celebrate
Dec	2022	Child Abuse Prevention Training BOOST Child and Youth Advocacy Centre

MEMBER AFFILIATIONS:

2024 - present	Writers Union of Canada
2024 - present	CanAsian Artists Network
2024 - present	Canadian Authors Association
2024 - present	National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
2024 - present	The International Society for Psychological and Social Approaches to Psychosis- United States Chapter (ISPS-US)
2024 - present	Child Care Now - Canada
2024 - present	Ontario Coalition of Better Child Care, OCBCC
2021 - present	Workman Arts Organization Member Artist
2019 - present	College of Early Childhood Educators
2019 - present	George Brown College Advocates Club
2017 - present	Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario, AECEO

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

2024 - Present	Canadian Authors Association- Advocacy Committee member
2024 - Present	George Brown College (GBC) Accessibilities for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Sub-Committee
2022 - Present	Chair- GBC Early Childhood Advocates Club
2024 - Present	Patient and Family Advisory Council Member (PFAC) of Psychiatry- Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
2024 - Present	Federick W. Thompson Anxiety Disorders Centre- Patient and Family Committee Liaison- Sunnybrook Hospital

AWARDS & HONOURS

2026	University Graduate Scholarship – Guelph University
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2026	Dean's Scholarship – Guelph University
2025	Elena Grothier Memorial Scholarship- Guelph University
2025	Graduate Tuition Scholarship – Guelph University
2025	Board of Graduate Studies Research Scholarship – Guelph University
2025	Indie Reader Review Awards Memoir / Self-Help
2025	International Impact Book Awards Best Self-Help & Memoir Award
2025	JK Paper & Times of India Women Author Awards Best Non-Fiction Book Awards Nominee
2024.	PragatiE Vichaar Literature Festival- PVLf Best Debut Fiction Book Nominee
2024	Student Association Community Services Third- and Fourth-Year Student Scholarship
2024	George Brown College Bursary for ECE Degree
2020	Dean's List, Fall 2020 George Brown College, Toronto, ON
2019	George Brown College Bursary for ECE Diploma
2012	Argentine Tango Gold Medalist State Open Dance Sport Championship
2011	Latin Ballroom Bronze Medalist <i>All India Dance Sports Federation (AIDSF)</i>
LANGUAGES	Hindi, Punjabi, English, Marathi, Urdu