



Thrive

Counselling and Consultancy

Mandalas...

In various spiritual traditions, Mandalas may be employed for focusing attention, as a spiritual teaching tool, for establishing a sacred space, and as an aid to meditation and trance induction. According to David Fontana, its symbolic nature can help one "to access progressively deeper levels of the unconscious, ultimately assisting the meditator to experience a mystical sense of oneness with the ultimate unity from which the cosmos in all its manifold forms arises."

The psychoanalyst Carl Jung saw the Mandala as "a representation of the unconscious self," and believed his paintings of Mandalas enabled him to identify emotional disorders and work towards wholeness in personality.

In common use, Mandala has become a generic term for any plan, chart or geometric pattern that represents the cosmos metaphysically or symbolically, a microcosm of the Universe from the human perspective.

A Mandala has 3 basic properties:

1. Centre – inner self
2. Symmetry – opposites, yin/yang, light/dark
3. Cardinal points – varying from rigid to fluid; many points or none

Mandalas represent thought, feeling, intuition and sensation and provide the following benefits:

- ◇ A self-healing, meditative process
- ◇ Express and enhance your creativity
- ◇ Harmonize your body, mind and soul
- ◇ Gaining insight into oneself
- ◇ Increase focus and concentration
- ◇ Increase self-esteem and self confidence
- ◇ Connect with the feminine essence within

This Mandala exercise is your own experience and so can be whatever you want it to be. Think of the colours, shades, shapes, symbols, images that represent your inner feminine being. From simple to complex, light to dark, explore, honour and celebrate your feminine self.....



Tree of Life: www.arttherapyblog.com

To create your own Mandala...

Prepare...

- ◇ Decide your art medium – pencils, pastels, colour, collage
- ◇ Prepare your art materials and have some practice paper handy
- ◇ Find a comfortable, relaxing space

Centre yourself

- ◇ Close your eyes, breathing slowly and deeply, begin to contemplate what your Mandala represents for you.
- ◇ What do you see at the centre of your Mandala – what sits at the core of your feminine being?

Begin...

- ◇ Let the images and feelings come in, both positive and negative.... acknowledge them and when you feel ready begin to draw or write down what comes up.
- ◇ You may find this happens straight away or takes some time. You may already know what your Mandala is going to look like.

Start at the centre and work your way out...

- ◇ If you are unsure, practice on your scrap paper first, scribble/draw whatever comes to mind – free association.

Remember...

- ◇ Don't get caught up in what you think your Mandala should be – it is your Mandala and whatever comes up is right for you
- ◇ Do your basic design in lead pencil first so if you make a mistake you can rub it out
- ◇ Colour pencils are best for clear, defined lines



Jim Gogarty- Deviant Art

- ◇ and more detailed, complex structures. Paint and pastels are best for shading and bigger simple designs
- ◇ Think about your colours, shapes, symbols and images. What are you drawn to, what influences you, inspires you, makes you feel good? (i.e.: are you drawn to the ocean, the colour red or wild cats for example? What do these images, colours and images mean to you?)
- ◇ Keep yourself safe – if you feel that the process of creating your Mandala is causing you emotional distress, please ask for support
- ◇ The process is as important as the end result....and
- ◇ Most importantly, relax, nurture yourself and have fun!

If you don't thank you can start out by drawing a mandala there are plenty of online mandalas you can download to colour in. Colouring in is also a great way to practice mindfulness.

Check out these sites:

www.printmandala.com

www.colormandala.com

www.coloringcastle.com/mandala_coloring_pages.html

For more information on the history and significance of mandalas visit these sites:

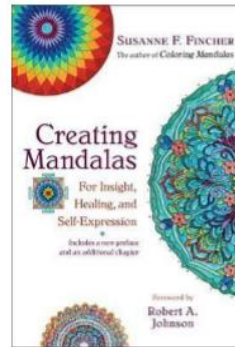
www.mandalaproject.org/What/Main.html

www.spiritualawakening.weebly.com/mandalas-what-are-they.html

www.mandaladesign.com/about-mandalas.html

Books...

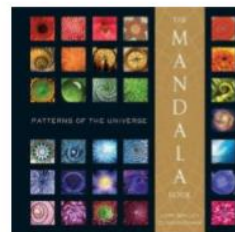
Creating Mandalas For Insight, Healing, and Self-Expression by Susan F Fincher



The circular designs known as mandalas are symbols of deep inner truth, and when creating your own mandalas, you can discover things about yourself that can surprise you. Susanne Fincher introduces here the history and ritual use of mandalas in cultures all over the world. She then shows you how to make your own, offering guidance on choosing art materials and techniques. She

discusses the symbolism of colours, numbers, shapes, and motifs (such as birds and flowers) that appear in mandalas, and she also presents several illustrated case histories of people who have successfully used her techniques.

The Mandala Book: Patterns of the Universe by Lori Bailey Cunningham



"The Mandala Book" is a visual symphony, filled with 500 stunning mandalic images from nature and civilization. As an archetypal symbol of wholeness, mandalas are replicated on a grand scale in both human culture and the natural universe. Drawing from history,

science, religion and art, Lori Bailey Cunningham conducts a journey that spans from prehistoric petroglyphs to Carl Jung, from tiny particles of matter to entire galaxies. She explains the concepts of mandalas and patterns clearly and simply, showing how they are at the root of life itself.

Mandalas can be a powerful tool in art therapy. If you are interested in gaining greater personal insight with the use of mandalas in a safe and guided space, contact



Thrive

Counselling and Consultancy