

Creating a Mandala ~ how and why

A mandala is a sacred circle with a centre point, a universal image that has long been used as a source of oneness and wisdom. It uses symbolic forms to draw out truths from the unconscious. These symbols help to connect our inner life to our outer life.

Mandala creating is for insight, healing and self-expression, A mandala reflects the Self. Mandalas can be an anchor for us in times of darkness, pain, and confusion. Through creating mandalas, we can come to a deeper understanding of ourselves and our place in the universe.



Beginning a mandala practice.

- 1. Begin with some centering.** This might involve moving into silence, paying attention to your breath, becoming present to your body, reading and praying with a sacred text, or just calling your awareness to the sacred presence already with you.
- 2. Awaken your energy through gentle movement.** Consider some easy stretching or putting on a piece of music and just letting your body move how it longs to. Movement will help to move your awareness down into your body, so that you can release your thinking mind.
- 3. Sit down to your sheet of blank paper.**
- 4. Decide whether music would support your process or if silence works better.**

5. Draw a circle on the page either with a compass or the bottom of a jar. **As you draw this circle let it be an act of prayer.** You are creating a sacred container – or tabernacle. Placing the circle on the page is an act of commitment to yourself, to creating this space within which you can let whatever is moving through you come forth.

6. Connect again to your breath and invite the Spirit to be active in this process.

7. Begin to explore images and symbols through colour and shape. With markers, coloured pencils, crayons, paint or collage material, notice which colours are drawing you at this time without judgment or expectation. Remember that this is not about making beautiful art but about being true to what is happening inside of you. Draw images or symbols, or simply express something through colouring, it doesn't have to look like anything in particular.

8. Be fully aware of the process. Notice what thoughts or feelings arise. This is art as meditation, so we cultivate our inner witness through this process. The witness is that calm, compassionate, curious, and infinitely wise part of ourselves that can observe what is happening internally without getting hooked by it.

9. Once you come to a place of completion with your piece. Allow yourself to have a few moments of sitting in stillness. Rest into a space of being, rather than doing.

10. Then move into a time of reflection. Perhaps journaling what you noticed in this experience, what inner voices did you encounter, what were the challenges and moments of ease? You are not trying to analyze your creation, but tend to the process, name what happened, be curious about your experience.

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James Bay United Church
511 Michigan Street, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1A7
www.jamesbayunited.com