How to Make a Personal Mandala

"Each time.....you create a mandala, you invite a little harmony into your life."

Susan Fincher, Coloring Mandalas: For Insight, Healing and Self-Expression, ç 2000, Shambala Publications, Inc, Boston

OVERVIEW

Making a personal mandala is meditative art. The word mandala derives from the Sanskrit, meaning sacred circle. For centuries people have been making circles inspired by the natural world. Some of the most intriguing are mandalas made with sand. These mandalas, typically spread out on the ground, are part of celebrations and rituals for healing and spiritual expression. The mandala is swept away – returned to the earth – when the ritual is over.

Here we are using a flower mandala design, but you can draw your own mandala differently if you prefer. All mandalas share several attributes:

1. Mandalas are made in a circle, symbolizing wholeness
2. The designs are symmetrical, for balance
3. Mandalas start from the center and move outward, just as our own lives are reflected from inward to outward. The center of the mandala is where you begin.
4. Each mandala is personal, and no two will be exactly the same even though we begin with the same design. The mandala you make now will be an expression of who you are in this moment of time.

You may use any art materials you choose: crayons, water-based markers, colored pencils, watercolor paints. You may also want to have a permanent marker available so that you can draw symbols or write words that are meaningful to you.

PLANNING

There are two ways to approach making a mandala: **intuitively** or **intentionally**, although each approach has a little of the other in it.

An **intentional mandala** is one you plan out ahead of time. You have an idea about how you want it to look when you're finished from an artistic point of view, or there's a specific outcome you want to achieve.

A good example of an intentional mandala is one you make for work/life balance, or one you make to express your cultural heritage. These may call for specific colors, words, or symbols that you can plan out ahead of time.

With an **intuitive mandala**, you are working with no preconceived intentions. You apply color to each section of the mandala, intuitively choosing colors as you go. Only after it is all done, including any writing or drawing, do you look at it in a more objective way and find out what it is telling you about yourself and your feelings.

GETTING STARTED

When you create a mandala, allow yourself to relax and look at the shapes and colors you have before you. Starting in the middle and working outward, color in the sections of the design. Then draw shapes, symbols, and words that have meaning for you. When you are done with this process, step back and look at the mandala. What feelings came up for you while you were making it? What does it tell you about yourself or your current situation? You can keep the mandala entirely to yourself or choose to share it.

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"Colour is a power which directly influences the soul ."

Wassily Kandinsky

When you make a mandala, choose colors based on how you're feeling, without thinking about them. Later, you can go back and analyze your choices to see what you can learn from them.

Colors can represent emotions and moods. Each color has a light vibration that corresponds to certain energies. While we all perceive the same range of colors, we may react to them differently.

In general, these are some common associations with the spectrum of colors we discern:

RED

An energizing color. It symbolizes fire, passion, power, love, anger, and danger.

ORANGE

Represents life force, strength, vitality, optimism, and strength.

YELLOW

Reminds us of the sun and can symbolize consciousness, happiness, and cheer.

GREEN

The color of nature. It reminds us of balance, harmony, health, growth, and abundance.

BLUE

Calming and relaxing. It represents the sky, eternity, serenity, wisdom, and dependability.

PURPLE

The color used for nobility. It evokes intuition, spirituality, and creativity.

BROWN

The symbol of the earth, fertility and stability.

BLACK

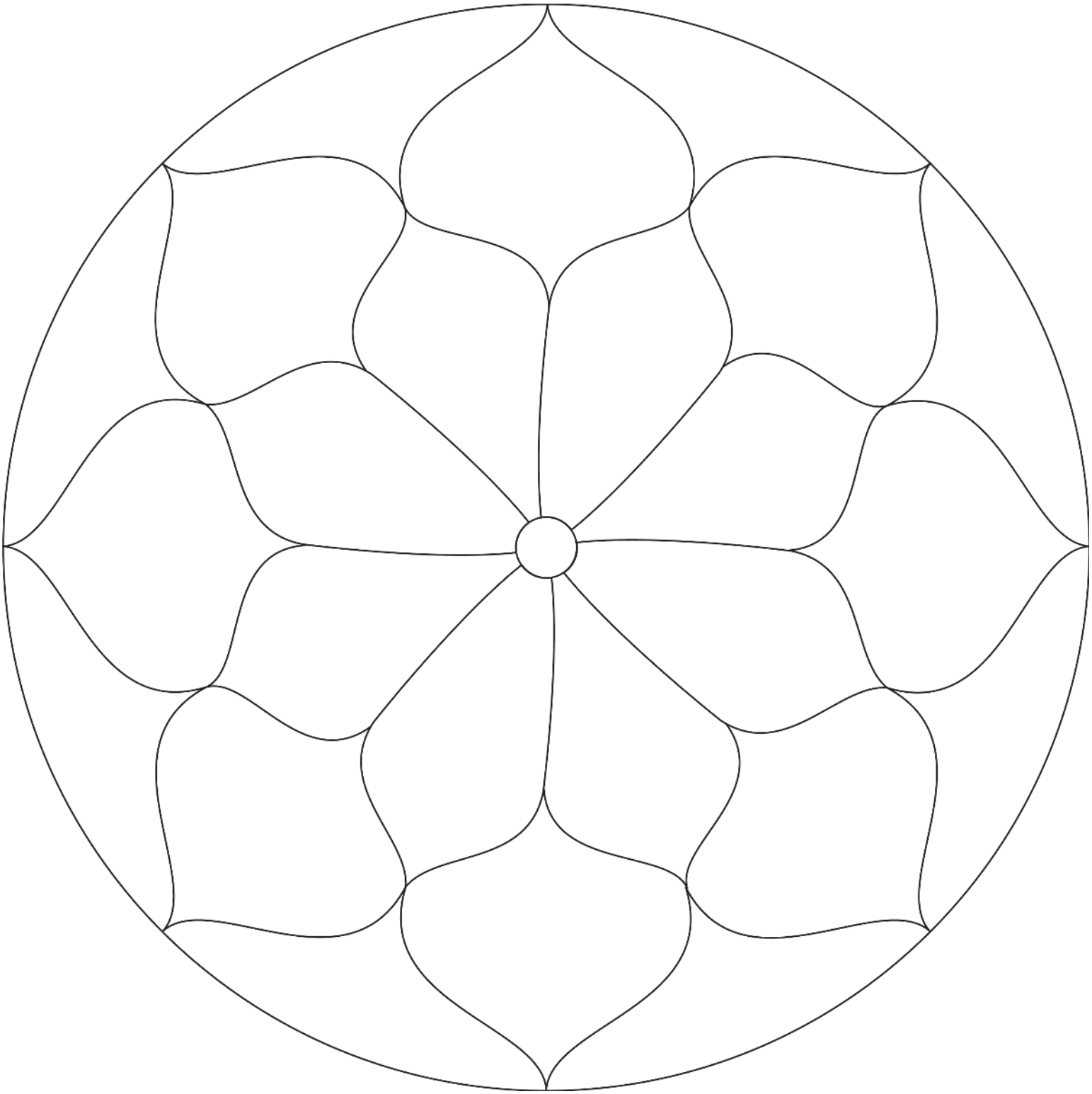
The color of darkness, mystery, and remembrance.

WHITE

Symbolizes purity, innocence, and birth.

For an in depth art experience, try our Personal Sand Mandala kit which is a new way to use sand to make personal mandalas for meditation, cultural enrichment, and expressive art. **Learn more at sandartmandalas.com**

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