



CLASS ONE: BEGINNING YOUR MANDALA PRACTICE

Mandalas are all around us. Take some time this week to notice some commonplace, every day mandalas. Snap a few photos, print them out and tape them in your journal. Or maybe you'd like to sketch them in your journal or simply make a list of what you noticed.

Why Create Mandalas

We create mandalas for quiet, restorative relaxation. We create mandalas to release tension and anxiety. We create mandalas to express our joys and sorrows. We create mandalas when we have lost our way. We create mandalas to gather strength and wisdom for the next step in our journey.

Beginning Your Black and White Mandala Practice

Continue this black and white mandala practice throughout the week. Try to create one every day as a daily practice.

Your Creative Space

You've decided where the best place to practice is and you have gathered your supplies. Remember to consider starting with an opening ritual for your practice: perhaps lighting a candle or burning some incense, listening to soft instrumental music or silence. You will fine tune your Creative Space as you get deeper into your practice.

Cleansing Breaths and Beginning

Take several deep cleansing breaths, slowly breathing in filling your belly with air, and then filling your chest. Pause for a second or two and then slowly exhale from your chest and then your belly. Repeat this several times as a way of settling into the quiet.

You can do this with eyes open or shut. Begin only when you are ready.

RESPONDING to this week's lessons

It's time to pull out your sketchbook journal and your favorite thing to write with. I suggest putting the date and the name of the lesson at the top of your journal entry.

Lesson #1

What drew you to the mandalas you noticed?

Did you sense any themes in what you noticed? If so what were they?

Lesson #2

How did you feel before your practice?

How did you feel afterwards?

What is your favorite mandala of the week? What is it that appeals to you the most?

Do you see any connections between what is going on in your life at this time and the mandalas you created?

Instruction Review:

1. Sharpen your white pencil.
2. Draw a circle on your black paper.
3. Use your compass or found template or even braver, free hand a circle.
4. Remember this is not about being perfect!
5. Put a dot in the center to the circle. This is called the Bindu.
6. Start in the center - the Bindu.
7. Draw outward toward the edge of the circle.
8. Your lines can be straight, or wavy or a combination of both.
9. When one line is drawn, draw another one close to it, doubling the line.
10. Begin to shade in these areas by pressing down hard on your pencil so that it makes a bright white intense tone and then lessen your pressure so that the color is less intense.
11. Think of this drawing as simply a doodle and get lost in the joy of it.
12. Pause from time to time and hold your mandala at arm's length.
13. Looking into what you have drawn, you might begin to see things.
14. If you see something, make it more known, accentuating its shape or pattern.
15. Follow the lead of your drawing.
16. Look at the Positive Space - the white shapes you create with your pencil.
17. Look at the Negative Space - the black spaces in-between what you have drawn.
18. You will know when you are finished.
19. Put the date on the back side of your mandala in one of the lower corners.