

GRATITUDE JOURNALS

You can create your own gratitude journal out of recycled materials, or use a journal you already have. Try to make it small, so you can always have it with you!

EACH DAY, FOLLOW 2 EASY STEPS.

- 1. Write the date.**
- 2. List 3 good things that happened to you in the last 24 hours. Be as specific as you can.**

This quick and simple task will reprogram your brain to scan for the positives in life. Studies have shown that journaling about a positive experience produces the same physiological responses that were generated when the positive experience took place.



MALA BEAD MEDITATION

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Mala beads can be used in combination with mantras as a wonderful and beginner-friendly form of meditation. Mantras are Sanskrit words, sounds, or phrases that are repeated in meditation as an object of concentration.

Mantras can be recited in Sanskrit or English.

HERE ARE SOME ENGLISH EXAMPLES:

I am enough.

I am at peace with what is.

I have purpose.

I am exactly where I need to be.

You can also use single words such as peace, calm, grounded, happy, etc.

DIRECTIONS

1. Select your mantra.
2. Sit in a comfortable seat.
3. Hold your mala beads in one hand. If you don't own mala beads, you can use Mardi Gras beads or any beaded necklace/bracelet.
4. Start at the first bead to the right of the Guru bead. The Guru bead is the large bead at the bottom. If you are using mardi gras beads, you can start anywhere!
5. Hold the first bead in between your thumb and middle finger.
6. Roll the bead between your thumb and middle finger as you say your mantra silently or aloud. If other thoughts enter your mind, that's ok. Simply notice them and let them drift away as you refocus on your mantra.
7. Then, move to the next bead and repeat your mantra again.
8. Try closing your eyes and continue repeating your mantra until you have made your way around the mala, ending at the bead right before the Guru Bead. This means you have said your mantra the traditional 108 times.
9. If you would like to continue meditating past 108, change directions on your mala beads and go back the other direction, but traditionally you do not cross over the Guru bead.



MANDALAS WITH NATURAL OBJECTS

BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

The circular form of the mandala is often used to represent the universe. Mandalas are present in nature in many different forms, such as atoms, cells, flowers, and animals. We can even see mandalas when we study different weather patterns, such as hurricanes or tornadoes.

There are many translations for the meaning of the word mandala, as you can find many varieties of mandalas across cultures and dating as far back as prehistoric times. One of those translations is “essence container.”

Focusing on creating a mandala can help you reconnect your body, mind, and spirit, especially if you’re feeling stressed out or pulled in too many directions. Mandalas can also help you reconnect with nature, especially when creating them outside or with natural objects.

MANDALA USES

- Connect to subconscious
- Connect to nature
- Meditation
- Contemplations
- Relaxation
- Grounding and centering

DIRECTIONS

- Gather natural materials such as sticks, stones, leaves, or flowers. If you collect rocks or crystals, you can also have fun looking up their meanings and tying that into the intention for your mandala.
- Before you start, set an intention for creating your mandala. This may be as simple as wanting to feel more relaxed or to relieve stress. Once you’ve completed your mandala, it will “hold” your intention because it’s an “essence container.” When placing your objects, do so slowly, with care and attention.
- Choose one object that you’d like to be your “central keystone” and place it in the center of your workspace.
- Now, use your other objects to create a circle around the central keystone. A helpful way to create even spacing is to follow a specific order when placing objects. First, place one above, one below, one to the right and one to the left of your central keystone. Next, place an object in between each of the 4 objects you just laid out to create an even circle.



Mandalas come in all sizes and can be simple or elaborate. After you’ve mastered the concentric circle patterns of a traditional mandala, you can research other grid shapes and patterns.