

Practicing Mindfulness Through Creativity



What is mindfulness?

Mindfulness is bringing awareness and attention to the self. The ability to recognize one's own thoughts, emotions, or bodily sensations can help emotionally regulate individuals.



Using creativity as a tool

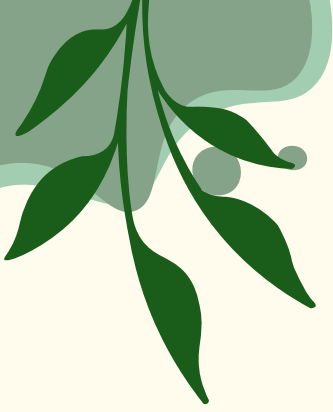
Creativity supports mindfulness by engaging in activities that help slow down and focus the mind. By encouraging this process, mindfulness can be more easily achieved. Using creative outlets allows you to stay present in the moment, which further strengthens your practice of mindfulness.

Drawing as a tool

Drawing as a tool for mindfulness is generally effective as it helps the individual focus on the present moment. It is an easily accessible activity, as it requires basic supplies, and can be as simple or as in-depth as the individual desires. Drawing is an effective tool for mindfulness as it helps one focus on the action, providing a break from thoughts of stress and anxiety. By expressing thoughts and feelings through the pencil, it may become easier to understand and manage your feelings.

Journaling as a tool

Journaling is a great tool to use daily or during stressful times because it is simple and easily accessible. It allows students to reflect on their thoughts and emotions, identify negative patterns, and reflect on what they want to change. Journaling helps you by encouraging you to slow down and reflect on what is really going on. The prompts are designed to be easy to complete, even on the busiest days, so students can maintain a consistent practice of mindfulness in their lives.



Drawing For Mindfulness

For each of the activities provided, all that will be required is a drawing utensil and a paper. It will be up to the your prerogative to decide on the materials used, and how much effort will be put in. Ideally, you will want to set aside uninterrupted time in a safe environment to focus on the chosen activity. Start with the pre-reflection and end with the post-reflection when drawing.

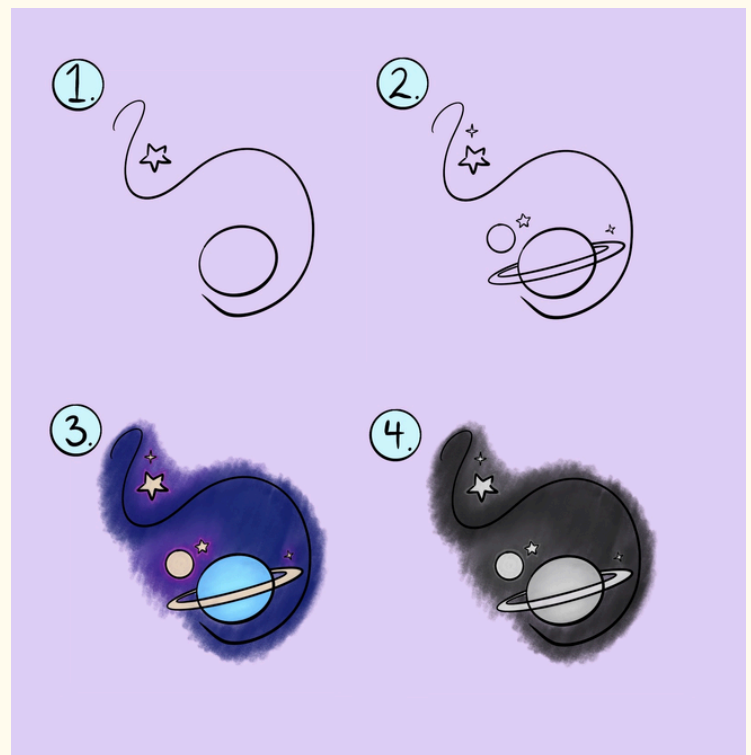
Pre-Reflection: How are you feeling currently?

Scribble Drawing

Scribble drawing is a low pressure and spontaneous process without planning. It doesn't need to be anything specific, just draw lines and shapes. This activity will help encourage spontaneity and connect with inner feelings, casting aside critical judgement.

How to get Started:

- Begin by doing some grounding exercises, close your eyes briefly and clear your mind.
- Next, open your eyes and begin drawing whatever comes to mind: any shapes, lines, or doodles. It does not have to be or look like anything specific.
- Be sure to follow your intuition, if you think of an idea, put it on the paper.
- Reflect on what you've drawn, but be sure not to pass critical judgement on your work.



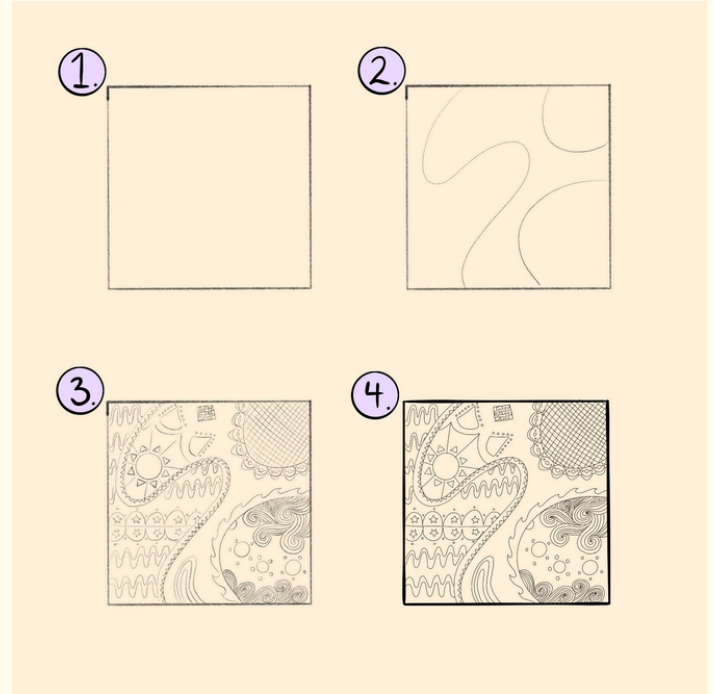
Drawing For Mindfulness

Zentangle

A zentangle is a meditative format of drawing and does not involve planning. The creative process is more important than the finished result, making for a low pressure drawing. Its inherent slow paced and relaxing process, helps induce calmness.

How to get Started:

- With a pencil, dot the corners of your paper and connect them to indicate the borders of your zentangle. You can use a ruler for precision if you want to.
- Next, you can draw “strings” to separate your tile for different patterns and shapes.
- Next, in pen draw “tangles” in your tile. The tangles are repeating patterns within the tile.
- Finally, you can optionally shade your “tangles” with pen or pencil, or leave them as is.

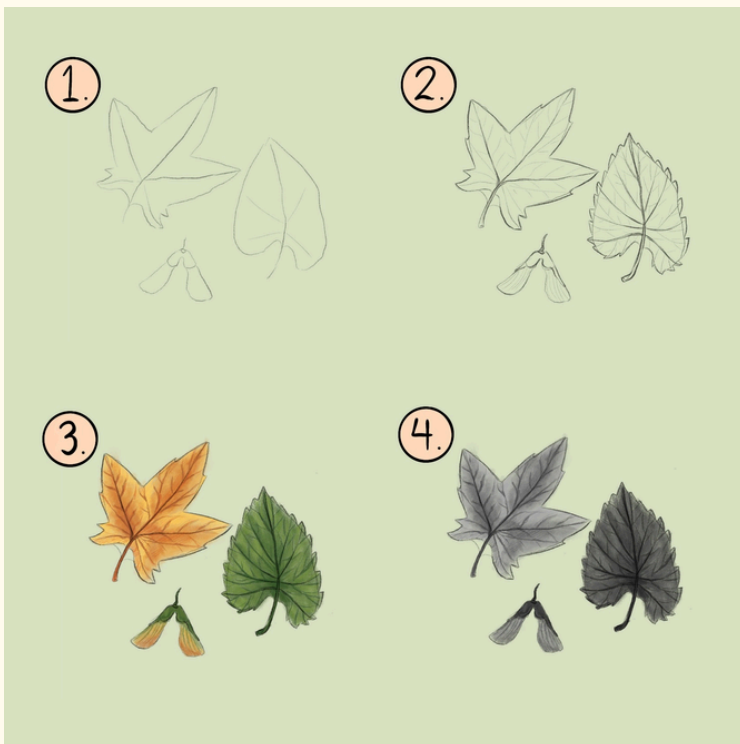


Nature Drawing

Drawing from nature is an excellent way to ground yourself to your surroundings and calm your nerves. It can be used to focus on the present, and objectively view your thoughts and feelings.

How to get Started:

- To begin, you must find a location in nature to sit and ground yourself. Notice your surroundings: What do you see? What do you hear?
- Draw your observations on paper, along with your thoughts and feelings.



Post-Drawing: How do you feel after journalling?



Journaling For Mindfulness

For journaling all you need is a writing utensil and paper. Ideally find a time when you can go with little interruptions and in a space that feels safe. Read these prompts and let them guide you as you reflect. Start with the pre-reflection and end with the post-reflection when journaling.

Pre-Reflection: How are you feeling currently?

Mind

Prompt: What is one thing currently taking up space in your mind? How can you break it into smaller steps or reframe it? How am I going to move forward positively?

Check in:

- What is your stress level right now out of 10? ...
- What is one thing today that I can let go of: ...
- What is my current emotion:

Body

Prompt: How did I support my body today? (Rest, Movement, Nourishment) What could I add tomorrow?

Tracking daily healthy habits:

For e.g.,

- I went for a 30-minute walk
- I ate 3 balanced meals
- I slept 8 hours

Social & Emotional

Prompt: Who made me feel supported recently? How can I connect with someone today?

Reflection:

- One boundary I need to set ...
- Someone I appreciated today ...

Academic

Prompt: What is one academic task I am proud of today? What is a goal I want to set for tomorrow?

To do:

- What is my top priority? ...
- How long will I spend on it? ...

Overall Mindfulness

Prompt: What did I do today that I am proud of? What is something I can do tomorrow to make me happy?

Post-Reflection: How do you feel after journaling?