



Intuitive Mandalas for Insight and Wellness

The word *mandala* is Sanskrit for magic circle, or circle of mystery. It holds the meaning of center and circumference simultaneously. The circle is an ancient symbol, across cultures, depicting, containing and expressing wholeness. From primitive stone carvings, to Native American medicine wheels, to Stonehenge, to labyrinths, to stain glass windows, to Tibetan intricate sand drawings that are completed and swept away, all are representative of the use of the mandala throughout humankind as a significant archetypal symbol.

- The *mandala* is an icon of our journey to wholeness.
- It is a symbol that signifies inner transformation from duality into oneness.
- The mandala is a symbol with unlimited potential which continues to unveil itself.
- It is a spiritual map to help guide us back to our natural state.
- The creation of a mandala is a ritual of wholeness.



Through Intuitive Mandala drawing, you can

- Relax
- Expand your imagination
- Trust your creativity
- Increase self-awareness
- Make peace with imperfection
- Discover healing in creative expression

Intuitive Mandalas are different from other art forms. They are meant to be a form of creative meditation that anyone can do. The process of creating the Intuitive mandala is just as important as the final creation. It involves showing up to your art materials and inviting your inner life to speak to you spontaneously, and unexpectedly. Each mandala is appreciated for its unique expression. Creating Intuitive Mandalas is based on the following practices:

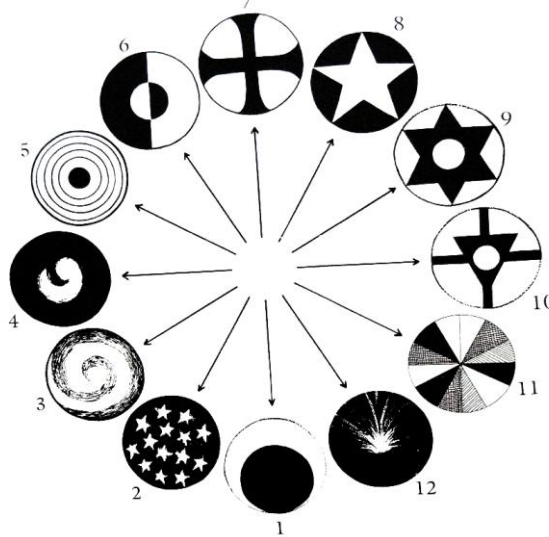
- Its creation is **spontaneous and intuitive**. When you begin creating a Intuitive mandala, you are asked to de-center, to release any preconceived idea of what it should be. Rather, allow the pattern to reveal itself as you draw.
- The mandala is free form. It may be totally abstract, or you may discover particular representative shapes find their way into the creation. The process of creation is a **practice of mindfulness** yet what comes forth is unexpected. Each stroke should be made deliberately, rather than hesitantly. Make peace with imperfection. The creator should see “mistakes” as the foundation for an unexpected pattern.
- The creation of Intuitive mandalas are **celebratory and ceremony**. Like meditation or prayer, the process is meant to feel freeing and healing. It is a prayer or meditation of gratitude for the beauty of life.
- A Intuitive mandala is **timeless**. It is a focused contemplative activity not requiring any technology or special tools. The process of creating them connects all who make them to the timeless human endeavor meaning making through the artistic process.



“When the Soul wants to experience something, she throws out an image in front of her and then steps into it.” Meister Eckhart

Archetypal Stages of the Great Round of the Mandala

Joan Kellogg, developed the Archetypal Stages of the Great Round of the Mandala in order to help us understand our own developmental spiraling process of growth. Our unconscious and collective minds reflect the cyclical nature we find in the natural world. The circle of life has periods of growth, periods of stagnation and of death. Mandalas and the Great Round can be engaged to help us better identify and travel through the various stages we encounter in our lives.



Archetypal Stages of the Great Round of Mandala, Joan Kellogg, 1978

Unconscious	1) The Void	2) Bliss	3) Labyrinth/Spiral
Conscious	4) Beginning	5) The Target	6) Paradoxical split/Dragon Fight
Conscious	7) Squaring the Circle	8) Functioning Ego	9) Crystallization
Unconscious	10) Gates of Death	11) Fragmentation	12) Transcendental Ecstasy

Colors and Possible Meanings

RED –strong emotions/ life energy/ energy/ passion / will to live

BLUE –intuitive/ receptive/ feminine/ wisdom /comfort

YELLOW -knowledge / cognition/ abstract thinking/ confidence/ vision/ masculine

ORANGE - power / ambition / assertion / will/aggression

GREEN –healing / renewal / accepting / ability to care for others

PURPLE –royalty/ specialness/ special mission/ altruism/ wounded healer/ taking responsibility

TURQUOISE - selfless/ humanitarian/ mediator/ creative problem-solver/ healer

YELLOW-GREEN – new beginnings/ new growth/ spring/ little queasy

WHITE – spiritual versus physical/ lack of affect or emotion/

BLACK - loss/ void/ mystery/ possible depression/ negation

BROWN/DARK BROWN–fertile ground / grounded/ possible insecurity/ low self-esteem / muddy

JEWEL TONES – vital, pure intention, clarity

DARKER COLORS – heaviness, stagnant, older—ready to release.

PASTELS – airy and light, lower energy, fading away – Meditative/Spiritual

Journaling

- Focusing first on your process, the felt sense of creating the mandala, what did you notice? What did you feel during the process of creation?
- Now look at the shapes, symbols or images. Are any of them like the shapes in the Archetypal Stages of the Great Round? If so, reflect on the stage and how it might inform where you are in your journey.
- Finally notice the colors you chose and reflect on the color meanings. What insight into your journey do the colors bring you?

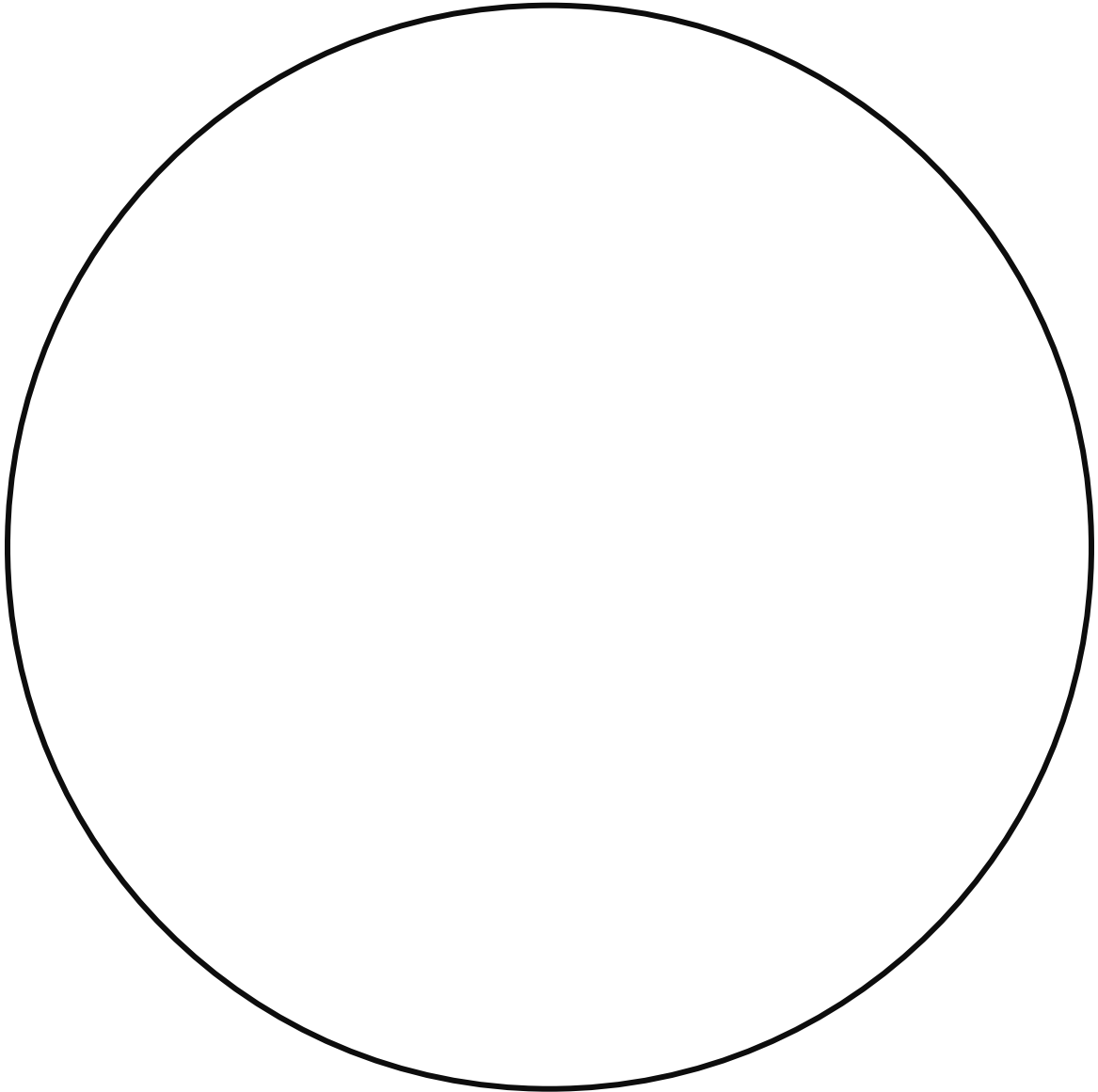
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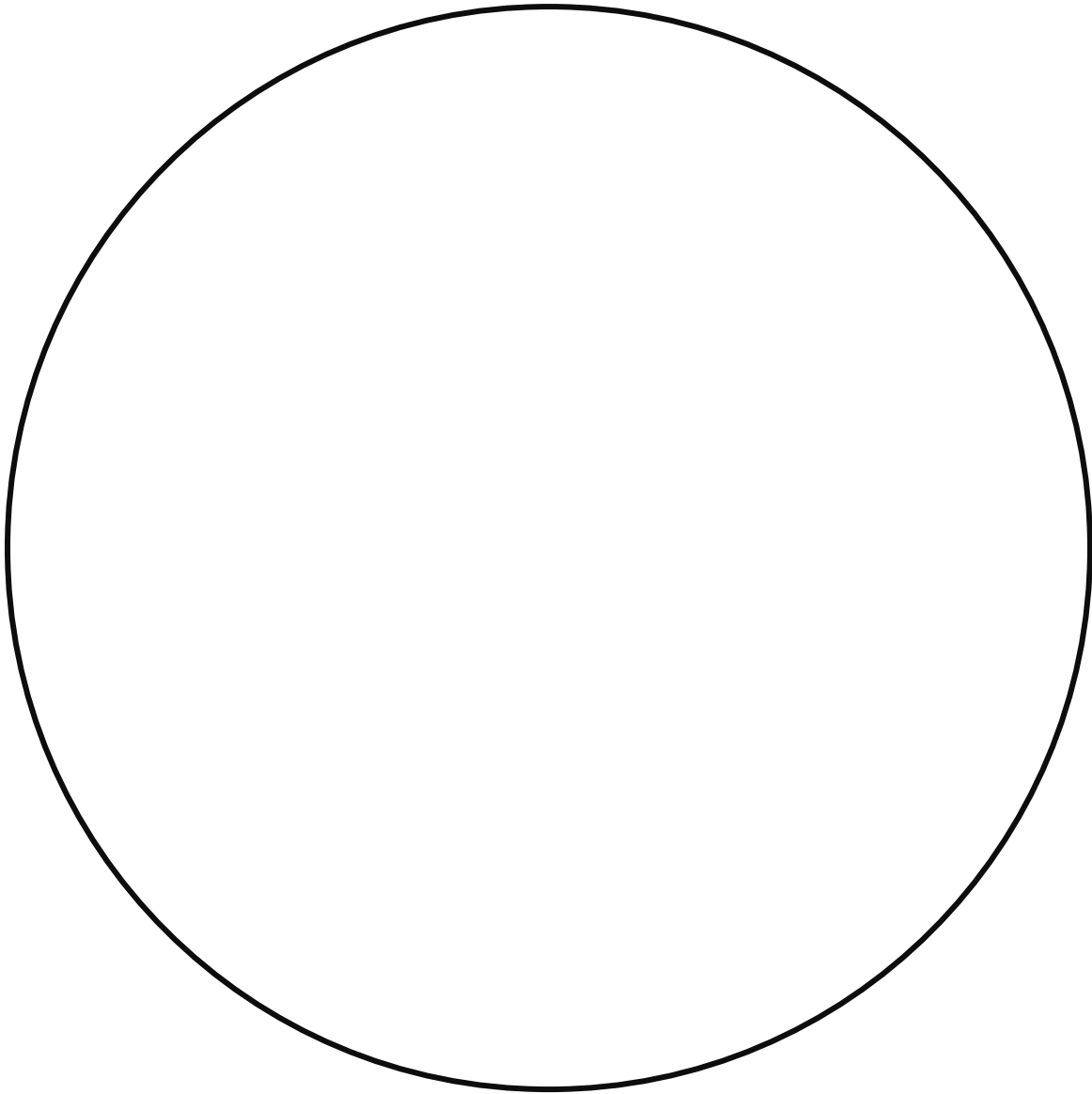
As you feel comfortable share your mandala with the group. When reflecting on one another's mandala's own your projections...."If this were my mandala...."

Cinquain: A five-line poem

To synthesize what has come forward write a cinquain about your mandala.

- Line 1: One word
- Line 2: Two words that describe Line 1.
- Line 3: Three action words ending in *-ing* that describe what Line 1. What is line one doing, revealing, being...
- Line 4: A four-word phrase or sentence that sums up Lines 1-3 or further describes Line 1.
- Line 5: One word, a metaphoric synonym for Line 1







*"You must give birth to your images.
They are the future waiting to be born.
Fear not the strangeness you feel.
The future must enter you long before it happens.
Just wait for the birth, for the hour of the new clarity."
Rainer Maria Rilke*

The mandala is an archetypal image whose occurrence is attested throughout the ages. It signifies the wholeness of the Self. This circular image represents the wholeness of the psychic ground or, to put it in mythic terms, the divinity incarnate in man. Carl Jung

I sketched every morning in a notebook a small circular drawing, a mandala, which seemed to correspond to my inner situation at the time...Only gradually did I discover what the mandala really is:...the Self, the wholeness of the personality, which if all goes well is harmonious. Carl Jung

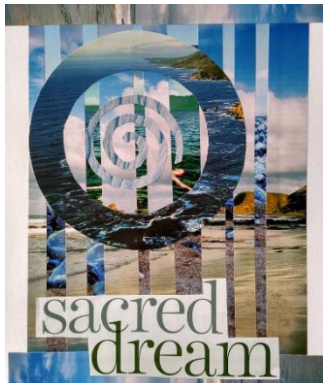
My mandalas were cryptograms concerning the state of the self which was presented to me anew each day...I guarded them like precious pearls....It became increasingly plain to me that the mandala is the center. It is the exponent of all paths. It is the path to the center, to individuation. Carl Jung

Often the hands will solve a mystery that the intellect has struggled with in vain. Carl Jung

Resources for Exploring the Archetypal Stages for the Great Round of the Mandala

Creating Mandalas: For Insight, Healing, and Self-Expression, by Susanne F. Fincher

The Mandala Workbook: A Creative Guide for Self-Exploration, Balance, and Well-Being, by Susanne F. Fincher



Other Ways to Engage the Mandala

- Move in a circle
- Natural objects arranged in a circle
- Collage a circle
- Draw or paint within a circle
- Walk a labyrinth
- Place previously completed artwork or photographs on the floor in a circle and stand inside
- Create an altar on a round table or round cloth.

