

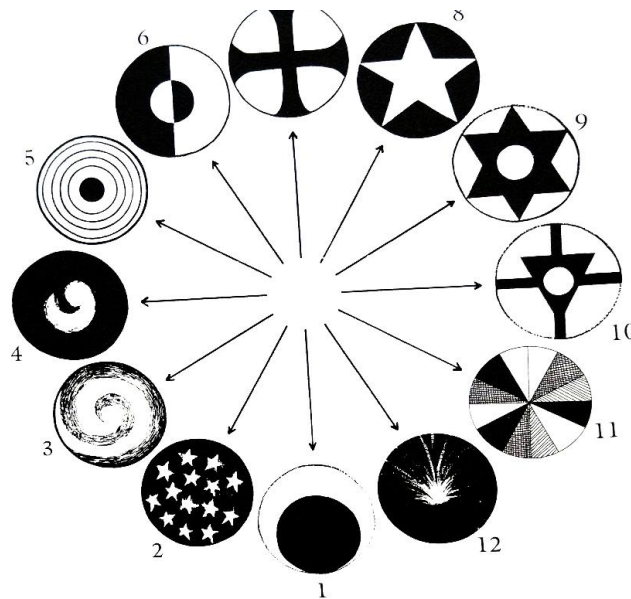
## Creating Mandalas for Insight and Healing

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.

Renowned Psychologist, C G. Jung through his own personal explorations began using the creation of mandalas to reveal the workings of the psyche as it seeks individuation. The mandala is a sacred container where just as in dreams the psyche reveals its ever-evolving process towards wholeness. *“I sketched every morning in a notebook a small circular drawing, a mandala, which seem 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....There is no linear evolution; there is only a circumambulation of the self.”* (Jung, 1965: 195-196)

### Archetypal Stages of the Great Round of the Mandala

Building on Jung’s work, art therapist, 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. In Kellogg’s work with thousands of mandalas a recurring pattern in the drawings began to emerge. Her work resulted in the development of The Archetypal Stages of the Great Round. The Great Round is a cycle of developmental and spiritual stages that we all go through. The twelve stages reflect the cycles of growth in nature. Kellogg’s work is useful in identifying archetypal stages that are present for ourselves along with energies represented through color.



*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

## Working With Your Own Mandala

- Guided meditation
- Starting in emptiness and allowing the psyche to bring forward that which is still in the shadows.
- Holy Listening: what colors and shapes want to be present in your mandala
- 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?
- Sharing: As you feel comfortable share your mandala with your neighbor or in break out session. When reflecting on one another's mandala's own your projections...."If this were my mandala...."
- Cinquain: 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