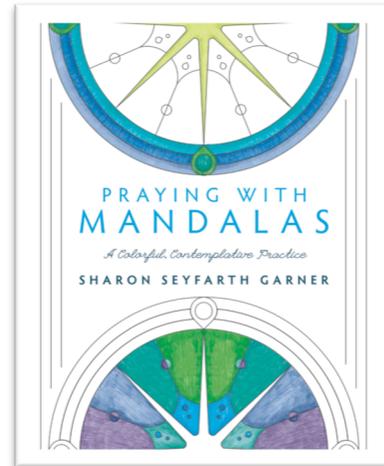


Praying with Mandalas

A Colorful, Contemplative Practice

Ten Tips for Getting Started



1. Everyone is an artist.

You are wonderfully made in the image of God, your Creator. Therefore, you have creative gifts embedded within you. Trust that you are a work of art created by God. Whatever you create will be a work of art as well.

2. Set aside time.

Designate time in your day to be with God *on purpose*. You may even choose to mark your prayer time as an appointment with God on your calendar. Determine what works best for you within the flow of your own life. Allow yourself to let go of your distractions and sit at the feet of Jesus to color and pray on a regular basis.

3. Set aside sacred space.

You may find it easier to spend time with God *on purpose* if you create a special space that is dedicated to prayer. Focusing on prayer can be difficult if you are at your desk with a pile of bills stacked in front of you. Gather together the items you will need - a Bible, mandalas, colored pencils, candle, relaxing music, a journal, and so on. If the space is comfortable and inviting, you will long to spend time there in prayer.

4. Lines are optional.

Release yourself from the pressure to color inside the lines. When praying with mandalas, lines are mere suggestions. Color within them, color on them, draw new lines, or draw beyond the lines. Anything goes!

5. No color is off-limits.

Pick colors that attract you and hold meaning for you - match, clash or blend colors. Don't overthink color selection so that it becomes a distraction of its own. Whatever colors you choose are precisely the right colors for your prayer.



6. Leave blank space.

There is no need to “finish” coloring a mandala. You can leave blank space that you return to at a later time. The blank spaces may even become integral parts of your prayerful creation.

7. Coloring utensils.

Colored pencils are a favorite of mine when it comes to coloring. If you are an experienced artist, you may prefer professional quality pencils. However, I have not found that expensive pencils work any better than inexpensive ones. I do see a value, however, in spending a little extra to get a wide variety of colors and shades. If you prefer brighter colors, gel pens can be a nice option as well.

8. Spin the mandala.

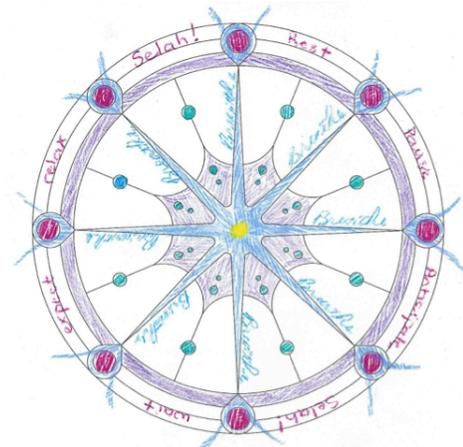
Remember that you can spin the mandala any direction you wish so that you can color comfortably whether you are left-handed or right-handed.

9. Breathe.

This may seem self-evident. However, sometimes in moments of great focus, it’s easy to hold your breath in concentration. Relax and breathe deeply while you color and pray.

10. The sky’s the limit!

Perhaps one of the most important things to remember is that there is no right way to color. Liberate yourself from any preconceived notion of how coloring is supposed to be done. Embrace your inner child and follow where the spirit leads. Your focus is the journey, not the destination.



Sē-lah!

