

Dear parent,

Mandalas are much more than just a pattern in a colouring book. When your child colours Mandalas, **he is being creative and improving his powers of concentration, and moreover, it has a calming influence on him.**

Children are used to always having things going on around them and to being told that time is money and you have to act fast. Right from when they are very small they lead a busy life, first at home and later at school. So it is not surprising that it's hard for them to sit still, listen to their inner selves and be calm. Hyperactive children are a modern phenomenon. This should come as no surprise given the noise and bustle of the world around us.

The Mandala has been present in **art and symbols throughout the ages** and is **one of the oldest symbols in the history of mankind.** The symbol of the Mandala has been found all over the world – it was used by the early Aboriginals in Australia, in Egypt's holy pictures, by the Indians and in all Eastern cultures. In Christianity the Mandala can be seen in the magnificent rosettes in cathedrals.

The word Mandala means circle in Sanskrit. The form of the Mandala is a circle with a centre – it is a **universal form symbolizing unity.** Mandalas are all around us: in flowers, fruit, trees, spiders and their webs, the eye, the shape of the earth – concentric circles can be seen everywhere, from the tiniest cell in our bodies to the largest galaxies.

The Swiss doctor and psychoanalyst **Carl Gustav Jung** (1875–1961) introduced, developed and popularised the Mandala in Western psychology. Jung painted his first Mandala in 1916 and then he painted one every morning for the rest of his life. He used the Mandala to understand the workings of his own mind, and in working with his patients he used Mandala drawings in analysis.

Neuropedagogical research in France has shown that colouring Mandalas leads to **relaxation and concentration** similar to that achieved through **breathing exercises or meditation.**

In order to ensure that colouring Mandalas is a relaxing experience for both you and your child, I would like to give you some **advice and useful tips.**

- ✪ **Children love colouring.** It's nice colouring Mandalas on your own, with friends or with mum and dad. Sit with your child sometimes and **enjoy the feeling of calm.**
- ✪ There is only one Mandala on each sheet of cardboard-thick paper. Neither children nor adults are in doubt when they get hold of a Mandala colouring book: the **quality** is completely different to what they are used to.
- ✪ Don't tell your child which colours to use. Your child will choose the **colours** that are right for him at the time.

- ✪ When your child has some homework that requires **deep concentration**, it will help to colour a simple Mandala first. He will be able to concentrate much better on his homework task afterwards.
- ✪ It is a good idea to **start colouring at the outer edge of the Mandala and work your way in towards the centre.** However, small children often choose to start in the middle and work their way out. Don't stop your child from doing this. The important thing is to colour in an structured manner and to keep going in one direction. **This systematic way of working has a calming influence on the child and improves his powers of concentration.**
- ✪ **It is important to create the right external conditions for this calming influence. Make sure that there is plenty of time for colouring Mandalas** and that **the child has peace and quiet to work in.** Phone calls and television disturb the peace. Complete silence is best, but otherwise one can play suitable relaxing background music. Try the CD **Mandala Moods.** Make sure that there is **plenty of light** too.
- ✪ **Good tools are essential:** soft crayons give a brilliant result, felt tipped pens of different thicknesses are good to work with and water colours can also be used for very simple Mandalas. Try Faber-Castell's high quality ergonomic Jumbo GRIP series, for example. The attractive patterns are also good for window and glass paintings.
- ✪ Colouring Mandalas is only meaningful if the child chooses his own pattern, so you should never tell your child which Mandala to colour. Let him decide for himself, and make his own choices.
- ✪ The book is bound in such a way **that each page can be removed individually.** This makes it easy to work with, and several children can share the same book. The finished Mandala can be hung on the wall or given away as a gift.
- ✪ If your child colours Mandalas at regular intervals it will help **improve his powers of concentration.**
- ✪ Mandala is a **recentering tool.** The circumference creates limits and clarity and the centre strengthens the ability to focus.

I hope that colouring Mandalas will give you and your child many wonderful colouring experiences.

Very best wishes,

Kirsten Aarup Sørensen
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