

# Art as Self-Care

## Creating Your Own Zentangle

### Marie A Wrinn, FNP-C, ACHPN, USA

#### What is Art?

The expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power.

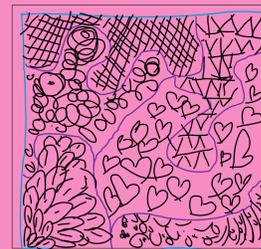
Personal art is as unique as a fingerprint. We may copy another person's artwork closely, but there always idiosyncrasies that are captured whenever a person puts pen to paper

#### Creating Your Own Zentangle

Tools Needed:

- 90 mm x 90 mm square, heavy duty paper
- Pencil
- Ink Pen- black is traditional

1. Note what your feelings are at the moment
2. Using a pencil, draw a border inside the paper (in blue)
3. Draw several threads thorough out the square (in purple)
4. Using a pen, fill in the blank areas with various shapes (black). Do not attempt to correct any "mistakes". Keep on filling in until you are done. You can fill in the blank areas with color if you like.
5. Note what your feelings at the end of the exercise. Reflect on the exercise.



#### Benefits of Using Art

Color invokes specific feelings in a person. How each person feels the color can change based on environment. Some colors make use feel calm, or angry, sad or happy. Colors used in an office may feel differently when using the same color in clothing or in a painting.

The simple act of placing pen to paper to express our feelings is therapeutic. There is no right or wrong, it's allowing the person to express what exists in that moment. Reflecting on the art at a later time can provide insight into how our brains interpret the world around us. This is particularly helpful when facing the suffering we see in others, and in ourselves.

#### Types of Art- Doodling

Doodling:

Random, repetitive drawings can help soothe the soul. No time frame, no skills needed, just paper and pen.

Zentangle:

A higher form of doodling. The process of creating a Zentangle looks intricate. It's a rather simple art process to help bring confidence and focus, while reducing anxiety. Repetitive, creative art is calming and relaxing. There is no particular outcome to achieve, other than the simple enjoyment of doodling within a structure. You only need paper, a black pen, and the best bit of all, you can do it practically anywhere! The permanency of using a black pen, teaches you how incorporate what you think are mistakes into the design. This helps you realize nothing is perfect in life. What really matters is how we adjust to mistakes or the unexpected in life. The final outcome is a simple reflection of where you are in the moment now.

#### Types of Art-Journaling

Art journaling is one of the most powerful exercises to offer for yourself and patients. Journaling itself is an incredibly useful tool in therapy. Most people go through life on a sort of autopilot. They live from day to day without really ever paying attention to themselves, what's going on in their lives or where they'll go next. We aren't naturally born with the ability to reflect deeply on our own experiences and certainly don't remember things well enough to have accurate recollections of our thoughts and feelings in the past

When we journal things as they happen, we preserve a more accurate picture how we felt and what we to writing naturally. Even less so, if it takes the form of keeping a conventional diary. Many people love to write and for them traditional journaling may be best. For the majority of people, art journaling is an easy gateway to instilling the journaling habit and reap all the benefits that come with it. In general, people enjoy the creative process itself enough to keep doing it. If you limit your journaling just to writing, you tend to perceive it as a chore.

