



Take a moment to unwind and creatively soothe anxious feelings.

Welcome!

I'm so glad you decided to take a moment to use a little creativity to help you soothe your anxious feelings or stress.

I came up with this idea for you to get "Creatively Calm" because I knew people needed a quick and easy way to unwind and let go of the "yucky" or draining feelings that can interfere with our ability to feel calm.

It's much easier than you think! No art background is needed... just a pinch of playfulness and a willingness to try something new.

This can quickly become a tool that you can have with you ALWAYS, any place, and any time.

You can do it in just a few minutes or you can settle in, put on music, and be more playful with it – it's up to you!

You can use any art supplies such as pens, colored pencils, crayons, highlighters – you name it.

You can also create images on your computer and do this right at your desk.

Are you seeing how easy you can make this? It's more about the soothing effect of doing this Art Exercise rather than how it looks.

There's one last thing I'd like to mention before you begin. **While I am a trained and licensed Art & Trauma Therapist, for this purpose and the purpose of my Creative Healing Integration website, I am not acting as YOUR therapist or in a therapist role.**

I'm simply sharing some amazing ways to bring more play and color to your ability to relax.

Are you ready to try it?

Great! Let's get started.

WHAT TO KEEP NEAR: MANDALA CALMING ART-STYLE EXERCISE

Gather up some materials:

Blank paper approximately 12x12", a dinner plate or compass, pencil, coloring materials (for example, crayons, markers, colored pencils, pictures, and glue).

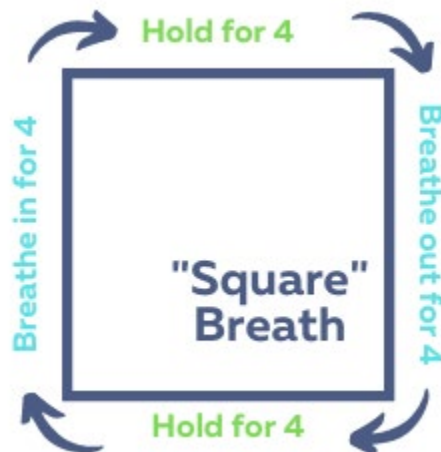
Remember, you can use anything you can find handy. This isn't about how good it looks, it's about the soothing process that happens when we create and use this part of our mind.

Leave your critic outside of this experience!

Breathe:

Before you begin. Stop and take a few, FULL breaths in and out. You can do what's called a "square breath" which is breathing in and out for the same count.

For example, breathe in for 1-2-3-4, hold it for 1-2-3-4, breathe out for 1-2-3-4, and hold it again for 1-2-3-4.



Take it a step further by playing relaxing music, getting in a cozy spot like your couch with your most comforting blanket, and settling in for some extra soothing.

Instructions:

Draw a circle on a blank piece of paper. A dinner size plate makes a lovely size circle.

Tip: You can make circles ahead of time to keep on hand.

Use the circle as an imaginary boundary and put:

- ✓ What you want to keep near that you love and care about on the inside of the circle.
- ✓ What you want to keep away (things that make you go “yuck”) on the outside of the circle.

You can use images, words, lines, colors, and shapes to make this Mandala.

Feel free to **thicken** the line of your Mandala if you would like to feel nearer to the things you want, being sure to **keep the things you don't want on the outside** of your circle.

Notice, too, how close the things you want to keep near or away are to the line of the Mandala.

Use this exercise at any time you want to be reminded of your priorities!

Mandalas can be supportive ways to focus your attention, intention and separate what is most significant for you in this moment.

Here's an example of what I want to keep near and far:



You can see I mix emotions with things.

I hope this helped you find a creative way to soothe your anxious feelings.

Feeling inspired to share? Tag me on Instagram [@artandtraumatherapist](#) or share on my Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/creativeartspsychoanalyst>.

I'd love to see what you've created and I'm curious how you felt after this exercise. Remember we're not looking for works of art here unless you feel inspired too!

You can learn to do this quickly or you can take your time, settle in, and feel into it more deeply... It's completely up to you!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mari". The letters are fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping 'M' and a trailing 'i'.

Mari Grande

Creative Healing Integration