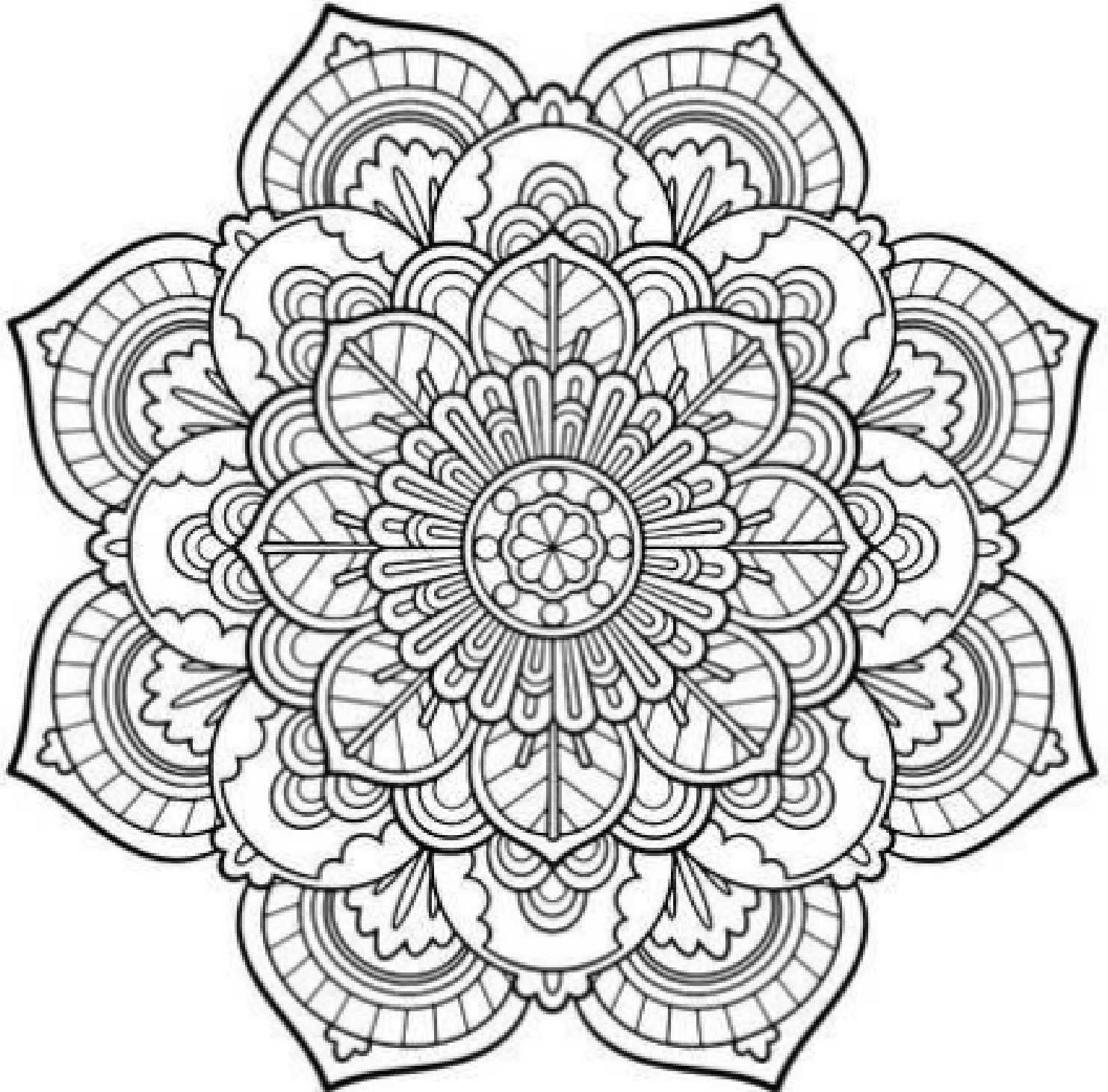




Mandala of Mindfulness



Contest Rules and Instructions:

- 1) This same coloring sheet will be used by all employees
- 2) Each employee may submit only one entry into the coloring contest
- 3) The submitted coloring sheet must be colored by the employee
- 4) The back of the coloring sheet must have the name of the employee as well as a brief statement of the employee's experience with coloring the design (less stress, better focus on other tasks, spending more time with the kids, maybe nothing at all, etc...)
- 5) The only mediums allowed for the coloring contest are crayon, marker, or colored pencil. Please no cutting or adding extra "bling".
- 6) To enter, submit your finished coloring sheet and a \$1 entry fee to your site's collector:
- 7) Coloring sheets must be submitted to the contest no later than 4:30 on **Friday, February 7th**.
- 8) Coloring sheets will be posted at the **Littleton** site from **2/3-2/15** for patients to vote for a winner
- 9) A winning entry will be announced **2/21** at noon
- 10) The winner will receive a **Valentine's Day** themed prize!

Mindfulness and Coloring

Chances are the last time you spent an hour coloring, you were a kid. Many of us "grow out of it", developing a mindset that coloring is childish. We may doodle on a piece of paper while we are in a meeting or on the phone... We may paint, sculpt, or work with graphic design programs, but we just can't bring ourselves to revert back to plain ol' coloring. Now with health and wellness a focus, the simple activity of coloring is becoming all the rage - making its way into the arena of activities many are using to enhance their life and de-stress. Adult coloring can be appealing for many reasons. Before you give the idea a thumbs-down, consider the following ways coloring can have an impact on your life:

Coloring is a way to "chill out" and get in the zone!

Coloring can help you get into the "flow state", loosely defined as "the mental state of operation in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity." In sports this is also called "being in the zone". It can also be considered a form of nostalgic meditation, calming our thoughts as we focus on staying in those pesky lines. Linking the activity to a time in our lives when we were less stressed helps us feel content.

You don't need to be an artist - anyone can color!

Coloring can be less overwhelming as an artistic outlet for many people. Trying to draw or paint on a blank canvas can be a daunting. But, open up a coloring book with the outlines already there for you to work with, and you can breathe a little easier and use it as a spring board, building confidence to let more of your artistic self out of its shell.

Coloring may lower blood pressure and decrease anxiety!

Coloring is a great example of practicing mindfulness. Try to avoid having a TV on in the background - maybe some soft music to stimulate your creative side. When we shut off our urge to multi task and just color, it can have terrific mental and physical health benefits. Think of the possible effects on your blood pressure, anxiety levels. Coloring may be a strategy to help us stay focused in an ADHD-conducive culture. Coloring book guru Johann Basford describes the natural draw to coloring best in my opinion: *"Some time spent with the simple task of adding color to the page and creating something beautiful really seems to appeal to people. There's also the nostalgia factor. Chances are the last time you spent an hour or so coloring in you didn't have a mortgage and you weren't worried about a nagging boss or the financial crisis! Coloring in seems to help people think about a time when life was simpler and more carefree."*

Some of the things we learned about coloring in nursery school can be applied to our life as well. A broken crayon still has potential to create beautiful art.

Have fun & enjoy!

Employee name _____

Tell about this experience of coloring: _____
