

Arts-Based Resources: Supporting Healing and Connection in the Midst of Trauma

Creative movement, singing, dancing, drawing and acting encourages the use of multiple modalities for expression. In a community responding to trauma, art can be used as a nonverbal pathway to reduce stress and anxiety, acknowledge and manage emotions, and build connections when verbal means of communications are more hampered by the trauma response. Here are some resources to consider using in the classroom or at home:

- **Color in Mandalas:** [Research](#) shows that coloring in mandalas is particularly therapeutic, activating the pleasure center of the brain, helping people to manage emotions and feel hope for the future. Access free coloring pages [here](#).
- **P.S. ARTS Hand & HeART booklet:** This [activity booklet](#) is packed with activities and resources for all ages that center on gratitude, breathing, and mindfulness.
- **Get Moving!** Moving your body in concert to music or sound-making can help release tension and increase mindfulness. You might make your own recycled musical instruments for sound making, or use silk scarves to encourage movement.
- **Draw Your Breath:** Relax and de-stress by taking a few minutes to [slow down your breath through drawing](#). Video included.
- **Center on positive feelings:**
 - **Who Is There For You?** Ask participants to draw a picture of someone who listens to you (crayons and stick figures encouraged). Reflect as a group on the importance of communicating and being heard.
 - **Smile Collage:** Make a collage of all the things that make you smile, and perhaps of smiles themselves. This activity can help spark joy when we need it the most. Reflect on how you feel looking at the collage. The goal is to reconnect with what makes you, you.