

# **HOW TO CREATE YOUR OWN EARTH MANDALA**

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*We know that going into nature reminds us of who we are. We are nature, why not be part of it instead of apart from it? When we enter the outdoors, we are liberated by the sounds, smells, sights and tactile objects we encounter. For example, have you ever gone into the forest and heard the trees talking? Maybe they are not talking, but sometimes it feels like they are talking to one another. Maybe you will find your own associations connected to nature and that is what it is all about! Find your voice with a little help from some of Nature's elements.*

*\*You acknowledge that by using this guide, you accept the personal risk that comes with any nature exploration. Please check with your local nature resource on poisonous plants or bugs to caution for.*

## **STEP 1: YOUR INVITATION TO CREATE**

I invite you to go on a nature trail or stroll in a public park, or maybe your own backyard and begin to pick up some items that strike your fancy. Is it a turquoise green branch with moss or a round smooth pebble? Pick it up, smell it if you want to. Feel the texture, see the texture, taste the colors, experience the shapes.

## **STEP 2: COLLECT NATURE OBJECTS**

When you go outside, feel free to begin picking up materials that are available for use. For example, choose leaves, flower petals, sticks, or branches (several of each). As you pick objects, be mindful of where you are picking from. I encourage you to do your own research prior to visiting your intended nature landscape or terrain to ensure the materials you find are safe to create with.

## **STEP 3: EXPLORE THE GROUNDS OF YOUR LOCATION**

What feels like a good...perhaps a *safe* space or open space to lay your nature objects down?

## **STEP 4: GET READY TO ASSEMBLE THE EARTH MANDALA**

Mandalas usually begin in the center. You start in a crisscross or an "x" and work your way out, but it does not have to begin that way. They are symmetrical in nature with patterns, perfectly imperfect forms- you will not be able to see the flaws in the larger picture. Some people begin on the outside and work their way inward. There is no right, no wrong, no good, nor bad way to approach art.

By now you likely have your materials in hand, in a bag, or tucked in your boot sleeve. Start placing them down and assemble. Think of some patterns of how you would like to utilize the materials.

## **STEP 5: BE CLEAR IN YOUR INTENTION**

Perhaps you have an intention for making this specific mandala. Is it to find peace, is it to honor loss, is it to build self-confidence, is it to find clarity? What is it for? What do you need most in your life right now?

By now you should have some footwork, perhaps some flower petals down, or some branches...it is starting to appear circular. Patterns are forming. I like to put something special in the center; do you have something special you want to protect or honor? Hold it for a little while before letting it go.

#### **STEP 6: GIVE THANKS AS YOU CREATE**

It takes a lot of work constructing these creations. As you build, give thanks and gratitude to trees and objects you use for allowing you to pluck their leaves off or disturb their current resting place if using them for art. Thanking the Universe for our hands, our minds, our hearts, our happiness, our sorrow, our aliveness-- to be able to make something beautiful that wasn't there before. Did you know you have the power to do that? Make something beautiful out of nothing? You just did!

#### **STEP 7: CHANT, MEDITATE OR SAY A GOOD WORD**

The Tibetan Buddhist monks chant for hours over their intricate sand mandalas before sweeping up their meticulous designs and releasing them into a body of water. Do you have a chant, mantra or good word you want to focus on or say out loud before leaving your earth mandala behind or sweeping it up into a body of water? Sometimes offering it to the grounds can be a liberating way of letting the Earth, the universe take its natural order.

#### **RELEASING YOUR WORK:**

The essence of the mandala has a duality of the temporary and the infinite. Be aware that your nature mandala may change and shift as the weather elements and the environment impact your creation of the mandala. Initially you are giving back what you borrowed from Mother Earth and now it shall be returned. I suggest speaking a blessing over it silently or aloud, if that feels comfortable for you. You may watch your creation change over the days and disappear also. Who knows who or what may come across your creation.

To see photo examples of an earth mandala, explore:

[www.moriahmylod.com/documentation](http://www.moriahmylod.com/documentation)