

A close-up photograph of a woman with long brown hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue sleeveless top, focused on coloring a mandala. She is holding a purple pencil in her right hand and a cluster of various colored pencils in her left hand. The mandala is on a white page with intricate patterns. The background is softly blurred, showing a desk with more colored pencils and a book.

Coloring: It's Not Just for Kids

Sharpen your colored pencils and dig out your favorite markers, because staying inside the lines isn't just for kids. Adult coloring books are one of the hottest trends. These coloring books look a little different than what you may remember from when you were a child. Instead of featuring cartoon characters with generous room to fill in the outline, coloring books geared toward a more mature crowd often contain tight spaces and intricate designs.

Color Yourself Happy

The great news is that coloring may be even more than a fun activity. Research shows that it can be a healthy way to help you de-stress and unwind. A study in *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association* found that just 30 minutes of an artistic activity, like coloring, is enough to reduce anxiety levels.

The Power Of Pictures

There are several reasons that coloring may be a helpful tool for putting your mind at ease. Since it doesn't require much thought, coloring can put you in a relaxing "trancelike" state. In addition, coloring may simply be an activity you enjoy doing. Pleasurable activities are known to lower your stress levels. Best of all, coloring is an inexpensive hobby you can do almost anytime, anywhere.

If you're feeling stressed out, give yourself permission to step away and do something else to help take the edge off. Taking 20 minutes to do an activity that makes you feel good, such as coloring, can make you feel less overwhelmed when you return to the stressful activity later.