



## Adult Coloring Books

Remember the carefree days when you would get out your box of crayons, markers, or colored pencils and draw/color for hours? Nothing else in the world mattered except your creation. Who would have thought that this simple, childhood activity would be used as therapy for psychological disorders.

The popularity of adult coloring books has surged within the last decade, but the idea for the “prescription” of adult coloring stems back to the late psychologist Carl Jung, over 100 years ago. Carl Jung thought it would help his patients access their subconscious and new self-knowledge. Many psychologists, today, suggest this to patients as an alternative to medication, as a means of relaxation, and as a calming tool. Research has been done to support adult coloring recommendations. A 2005 study documented a reduction in anxiety in subjects after a short time of coloring geometric patterns. Some people report sleeping better when coloring for even 5 minutes before bedtime.



Researchers at the [International Islamic University Islamabad](https://www.britannica.com/topic/mandala-diagram) delved further into the potential to reduce anxiety. In a quasi-experimental study it was found that the use of mandalas (<https://www.britannica.com/topic/mandala-diagram>) was able to decrease both state anxiety (i.e. contextual emotional experience) and trait anxiety (i.e. [personality](#) characteristic) in just 30 minutes, however, the difference in state anxiety was almost twice that of the difference noted in trait anxiety.

Adult coloring books can help with a number of emotional and mental health issues including obsessive-compulsive disorders, anxiety disorders, stress disorders, depressive disorders, eating disorder, anger management issues and substance abuse issues. The time and focus that adult coloring takes helps the individual remove the focus from the negative issues and habits, and focus them in a safe and productive way.

Coloring also brings us back to a simpler time. An activity that can invoke the easier and happier times of childhood; a time when we did not have as many responsibilities, and could just do something because we wanted to, for the pure joy of it. It can take you out of your present stresses and worries for even a few hours at a time, which can have an exceptionally recuperative effect. In individuals with PTSD, anxiety and stress disorders, coloring actually can calm down the amygdala. This is the part of the brain that controls our fight or flight response, and keeps individuals in a heightened state of worry, panic and hyper-vigilance, when it is active.

Coloring also has intellectual benefits. It utilizes areas of the brain, that enhance focus, and it also helps with problem solving and organizational skills. The frontal lobes are responsible for these higher level activities and functions of the brain, and coloring detailed pictures activates all these properties. Some high-profile business professionals in high-stress industries, as well as creative professionals utilize coloring therapy for stress reduction, as well as to help improve focus and spur creativity. Coloring utilizes both hemispheres of the brain, right and left. When we are thinking about balance, color choices, applying colored pencil to paper, we are working on problem solving and fine motor skills.

Coloring therapy is being used experimentally, and research is still being conducted; it is not a substitute for regular therapy or consulting with a qualified professional. However, there are no real negatives to this activity, so why not step out of the craziness of life for a while, and just color?

The following website was sourced and referenced for this article:

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-nikki-martinez-psyd-lcpc/7-reasons-adult-coloring-books-are-great-for-your-mental-emotional-and-intellectual-health\\_b\\_8626136.html](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/dr-nikki-martinez-psyd-lcpc/7-reasons-adult-coloring-books-are-great-for-your-mental-emotional-and-intellectual-health_b_8626136.html)

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/modern-mentality/201803/are-adult-coloring-books-actually-helpful>

<https://wellnessmama.com/77075/adult-coloring-books/>



**FOR PRODUCER USE ONLY**