

# Creative Interventions Clearinghouse

---

## **Mandalas in Supervision**

*Shelley Jackson, Joel Muro, Yueh-Ting Lee, & Kathy DeOrnellas*

*Texas Woman's University & National University of Taiwan*

---

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this creative intervention is to better understand and conceptualize complex client cases, and to grow personally and professionally, by making unconscious material conscious through the use of expressive arts.

### **Materials Needed:**

Paper, markers, crayons, colored pencils, paint

### **Procedures:**

The student begins the activity by closing their eyes and thinking about the issue that they have been discussing in supervision. The student breathes deeply as they slowly center themselves with their eyes closed. After a few moments the student opens their eyes and draws a circle on their paper. The student fills in their circle with color, shapes, and forms. Allow them to work quietly for about 30 minutes. If they feel comfortable sharing their mandala with you (or the group, if using this as a group activity) they can hold up their creation when they have finished.

Next, the students reflect on their mandala in writing. The student makes note of colors, shapes, numbers (identified through groupings of certain images) on their mandala. The student brainstorms any associations these colors, shapes, and numbers have for them personally. Concentrating on each color, shape, and number and builds awareness of feelings or memories that surface.

The end result is a mandala that helps the student to process their feelings around a specific issue they have been experiencing in supervision. They may find that the creation process of the mandala taps into the subconscious or unconscious mind to make them aware of feelings they were not recognizing, and alternative ways to conceptualize the client's case.

### **Process Questions and Follow-Up:**

These process questions should be asked in the initial guided imagery phase of the activity:

What is going on between you and the client?

Who are you trying to be with the client?

Who are you trying to be as a counselor?

Where would you like to see this client 5 years from now?

How is your reputation as a counselor reflected in this supervision issue?

### **Practice Setting:**

Counselor Education

---

For full article and case examples, please see Jackson, S. A., Muro, J., Lee, Y. T., & DeOrnellas, K. (2008). The sacred circle: Using mandalas in counselor supervision. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 3(3), 201-211