

7 reasons why you should learn how to 'Zentangle'

By Usha Hariprasad May 15, 2015

Zentangle is an art form described by creators Rick Roberts and Maria Thomas as, "Anything is possible, one stroke at a time". With just a black pen on white paper you tangle away creating beautiful patterns from base designs. The result; you not only create masterpieces that you would be proud of but you also realize that you are slowly moving towards mindfulness. Zentangle has now spread to 48 countries and boasts of nearly 1000 Zen certified trainers all over the world.

Here are 7 reasons as to why you should be zentangling right now!

1. It will unleash your creativity

Anyone can Zentangle even if they don't consider themselves an "artist". Zentangle demonstrates the truth that one can still create great pieces of art without a preconceived picture in mind.

2. It will make you calmer

When you Zentangle mindfully, drawing one stroke at a time filling up your patterns you are stilling your thoughts and going deeper in to meditative stage. With neither the past worries bothering you or the future anxieties gripping you, you will embrace the present moment becoming calmer.

3. It will make you less judgmental

No stroke is wrong in Zentangle. And that is the reason why Zentangle is done on pen and paper so that there is no scope for erasing any strokes that you consider imperfect. So regular practise of this helps you accept things the way they are.

4. Because it is mindful meditation

"When I start the simple steps of creating my Zentangle art, I go in to focus easily. Something in my brain immediately shifts, and I become calmer, more focused, more relaxed, and more able to let go of the swirling thoughts in my brain," says Emily Classon, a certified Zentangle teacher teaching in Northeastern Massachusetts and Southern New Hampshire. There is gradual dropping of thoughts when you Zentangle.

5. Your self-esteem will go through the roof

Dilip, a certified zentangle teacher, relates an incident to prove this point. "Some time back we had conducted a class for rural girls in Maharashtra. We taught them the principles of Zentangle and 4-5 patterns. One or two girls created beautiful tangles that were hung on the school walls. They were so happy. We could see the change in their attitude," reminisces Dilip.

6. It's a good way to get out of depression

Regular tangling helps to bring joy too. Dilip says, "A couple of months back we conducted a workshop for mentally depressed women rescued from trafficking. On the first day these girls aged somewhere between 17-20 years followed the Zentangle process for around 90 minutes. In those minutes we could observe their level of excitement and joy," adds Dilip. He also recalls an elderly lady in Mysore who had lost her husband, benefit tremendously from regular tangling. "Death had led her to depression. When she started tangling her mind started focusing less on the death and she started enjoying the new patterns that her work created," asserts Dilip.

7. Your kids will benefit from it too

Peer pressure, competitive spirit to be ahead of others, achieving things in life; these aspirations can create a stressed environment for the kids. With Zentangle this stress can be brought down.

So if meditation is not your cup of tea, then zentangle may be worth trying. Anything that can take you into the realm of meditation in the middle of day is surely worth your time.