



# SELF-CARE TOOLKIT

Resources to take care of your  
health and wellbeing





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## Introduction

We hope that this digital resource filled with mindfulness activities and practices is a helpful tool as you adjust to remote learning, practice physical distancing and settle into a new temporary normal. We realize that these changes in day-to-day living are affecting multiple aspects of our lives and we hope that the tools provided in this booklet help you manage the stress, and anxiety you may be feeling. There is a collective grief and loss as events have been canceled, daily routines are disrupted and financial strains grow. To help you adjust to these ever-changing circumstances, we have created this toolkit to provide you with a myriad of mindfulness resources that you can engage with independently to help you reduce your stress and improve your wellbeing.

We hope that you find resources here that work for you. Stay safe and healthy.

From the Mindful Making and Health Promotion and Wellness teams.





## Meditation & Mindfulness Practices

Meditation is about developing your awareness and attention. It is not about turning off your thoughts and feelings but rather trying to observe them without judgement. To begin you might focus on deep breathing exercises and informal mindfulness practices.

Benefits of Deep Breathing:

- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Promotes happiness
- Ignites peace and calmness
- Lowers blood pressure and heart rate
- Reduces tension
- Improves focus and concentration



Reference: [Mindful Magazine](#)

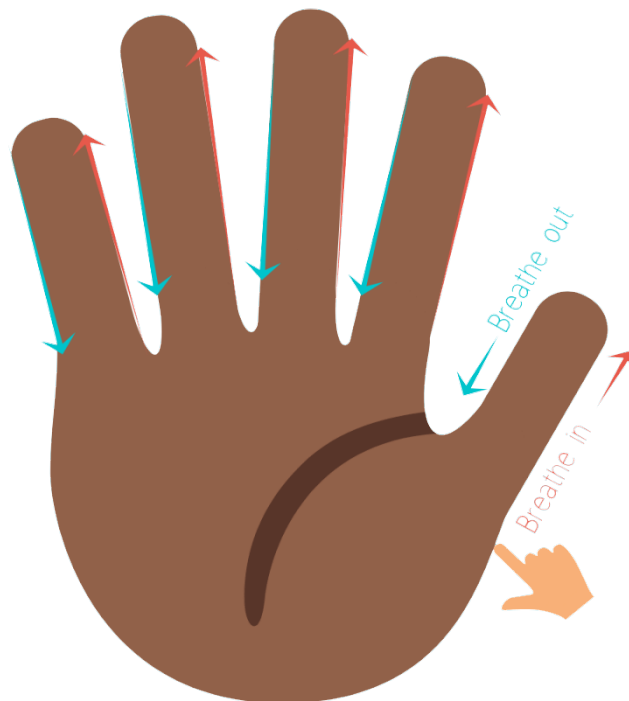






## Five Finger Breathing

- Sit or stand comfortably with your back straight
- Place one hand out in front of you, palm open
- Using the pointer finger of your opposite hand start at the base of your thumb and trace upwards as you breathe in
- Pause at the top of your finger
- Breathe out as you follow the inside of your thumb
- Repeat with the rest of your fingers





## 4-7-8 Breathing

- Sit or stand comfortably with your back straight
- Place the tip of your tongue on the roof of your mouth right behind your front teeth
- Empty your lungs of air
- Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4
- Hold your breathe at the top of your intake for a count of 7
- Exhale audibly through your mouth for a count of 8
- Repeat the cycle 3 times



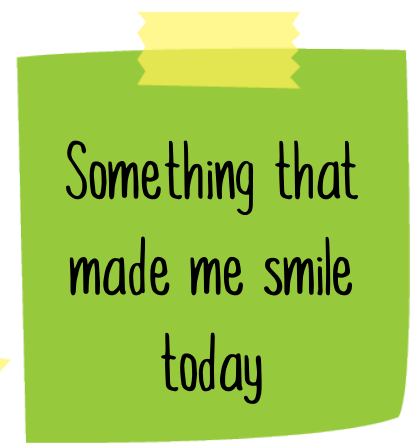
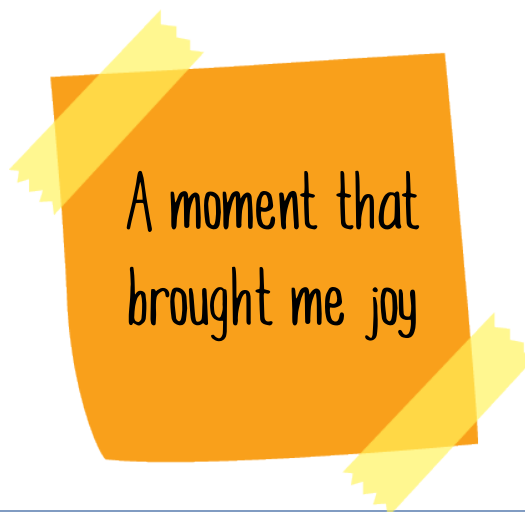


## Three Good Things

Gratitude increases positive emotion and raises our overall satisfaction with life. In these uncertain times it is more important than ever that we take time to notice the good moments.

This Three Good Things Practice will help you notice, and savor the moments of joy in your life.

- At the end of the day write down three things that went well or brought you joy
- Reflect on why that moment brought you joy, why it went well, why you're grateful ... and write about it
- You can add a doodle to illustrate the moment
- Try this every night for at least a week





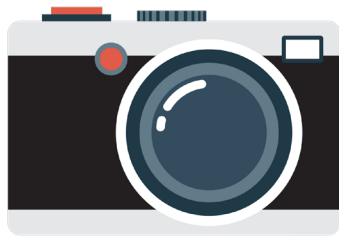


## Mindful Art

Studies have discovered that after engaging in something creative, people felt not only happier and calmer the following day but had more energy too.

Art-making helps us express things we have trouble putting into words and has been proven to be an effective way to deal with stress.

Both viewing and creating art can be meditative practices. When viewing art allow yourself to step into the present moment and allow the object or performance to be your anchor.





## Mindful Photography

While you may not be able to go out and about as usual getting out for walks is great for your health. While you are out there you may consider trying Mindful Photography.

Photography can be a great tool for practicing mindfulness when done with intention. The Center for Healthy Minds at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has developed and tested a five-week mindful photography curriculum with a grant from The John Templeton Foundation.

In the project manual they describe photography as a physical manifestation of mindfulness. “It [photography] is about stopping/pausing, observing, framing, focusing, and capturing/receiving...Basically, photography is about a relationship to the present moment.”

*References: [Greater Good Article - UC Berkeley](#)*





## Mindful Photography

**Step 1:** Take three deep breaths. Notice the noises around you, notice the different sensations; of your feet on the ground, perhaps the sun on your face.

**Step 2:** Begin a mindful walking practice and consciously notice what is drawing your attention

**Step 3:** Once something has caught your attention, stop and allow yourself to be curious. Notice what initially caught your attention and zoom in, notice color, texture, your relationship to the image, how it makes you feel, etc. Play with your perspective, notice how your relationship to the image changes as you zoom in and out, look at it from different angles, etc.

**Step 4:** Take another 3 breaths to recenter yourself. Return to the composition you felt most connected to, that brought you the most joy and take the picture.

**Step 5:** Repeat steps 2-4.

**Step 6 (optional):** Post your photo on Instagram using hashtag, #MindfulMaking. Check out the photos under the hashtag #MindfulPhotography for inspiration. Share what you noticed, what brought you joy, and what you are grateful for about this photo/experience in your caption. Remember to be mindful when scrolling through social media. Practice non-judgement and be curious about the stories your mind makes up.





# Mindful Movement

## Walking Meditation

Walking meditation is yet another tool to help develop your awareness and tune into the present moment. To practice walking meditation, you simply need a small space where you can walk without restriction, this can be indoors or outdoors.

## Yoga

Yoga connects mind and body by connecting physical postures with the breath. There are many different types of yoga that you can explore and they all help you to relieve stress, increase your flexibility, and focus your attention.





## Walking Meditation

**Step 1:** Begin by taking slow steps and pay attention to your feet, body, and breath, as you move.

**Step 2:** Walk for 5 to 10 minutes.

**Step 3:** After you have stopped walking simply pause, sit quietly, and reflect on your experience.

- What did you notice in your feet, hips, legs or other parts of your body?
- What did you notice in your mind and thought patterns?
- What did you notice about your breathing?

*Try this guided walking meditation if you need more guidance.*





## Mindful Eating Tips

Using the six strategies listed below may remind you to slow down, enjoy your meal and commit to eating mindfully. Practice at your next meal or snack! Check out this video to get started:

[Mindful Eating Video](#)

### Notice Your Food

- Before anything goes in your mouth, take a deep breath and look at your food. Notice how much of it there is. Then consider how that relates to how hungry you feel? Has it been presented attractively? Would you have done it differently? It doesn't matter whether your assessments are positive or negative so long as you're taking the time to think about it.

### Consider Variety

- Think of trail mix as an example. Are there raisins in there, or cranberries? Are there seeds or nuts? Are there chocolate pieces? Take a minute to notice and appreciate your food's ingredients.

### Take in the Aroma

- What do you notice? Does it smell sweet or savory? Does it smell stale or fresh? Can you identify some ingredients from the aroma?





## Mindful Eating Tips

### Observe Texture

- With every mouthful, note your food's texture and try to put a word to it. Be specific with your description, as if you were going to write a review.

### Is it Hot, Cold, Room Temperature?

- Has what you're eating been in the fridge? Is it at the ideal temperature for you or is it a little too hot or too cold? How do you like it best?

### Savor the Flavors

- Imagine that you didn't see what you put in your mouth. Can you identify it? Can you, for example, tell the difference between chicken and fish? Is it the flavor or is it the texture that you recognize?

*References: [Food and Nutrition](#) & [Today's Dietitian](#)*





## Nutritious Snacks

- Trail mix (see [Healthworks recipe](#))
- Apple/banana/celery + peanut butter
- Whole grain crackers + hummus
- Protein bar (look for 10+ g protein, <10 g sugar, and at least 5 g fiber)
- Grapes/apple slices + cheese
- Yogurt + granola
- Hard boiled egg + avocado
- Raw veggies + dip
- Dried fruit + nut
- Popcorn, light oil/salt





# Resources

## Websites

- [Healthy Penn State](#)
  - [Mindfulness Resources](#)
  - Stress Management Workbook
- [Mindful Magazine](#)
- [Kripalu Center for Yoga & Health](#)
  - Check out their Resources tab
  - Print their [free coloring book](#)
- [The Greater Good Magazine](#)
  - [Online Classes](#)

## Apps

- [Calm](#)
- [Insight Timer](#)
- [Headspace](#)







## Resources

### Books

- *Wherever You Go, There You Are* by Jon Kabatt-Zinn
- *The Little Book of Hygge: The Danish Way To Live Well* by Meik Wiking
- *The Little Book of Lykke: The Danish Search for the World's Happiest People* by Meik Wiking
- *You Are Here: Discovering the Magice of the Present Moment* by Thich Nhat Hanh
- *The Essential Rumi* by Jalal Al-Din Rumi

### YouTube

- [Yoga with Adriene](#)
- [Tavin's Origami Instructions](#)

### Classes and Kits

- [Etsy](#)
- [LinkedIn Learning - Penn State](#)
- [Coursera](#)

# Resources

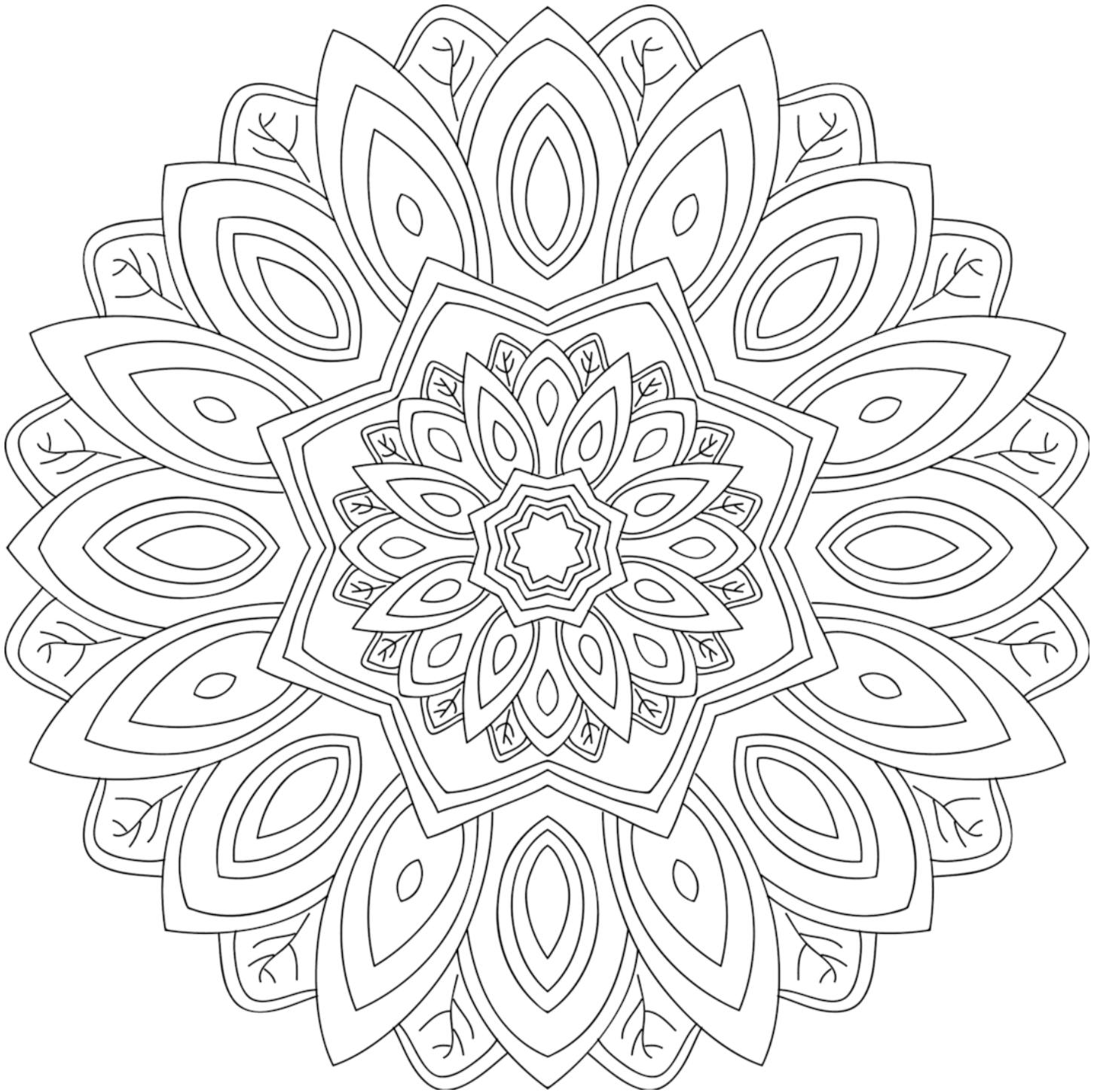
## Other Resources

- [NPR - Virtual Concerts](#)
- [Pinterest - Craft How-To's](#)
- [Virtual Arts & Culture Offerings](#)
- [Mindful Yoga Poses](#)

## Instagram

- #MindfulPhotography
- @MindfulMagazine
- [@HealthyPSU](#)
- [@PennStateCRec](#)
- [@PennStateCAPS](#)

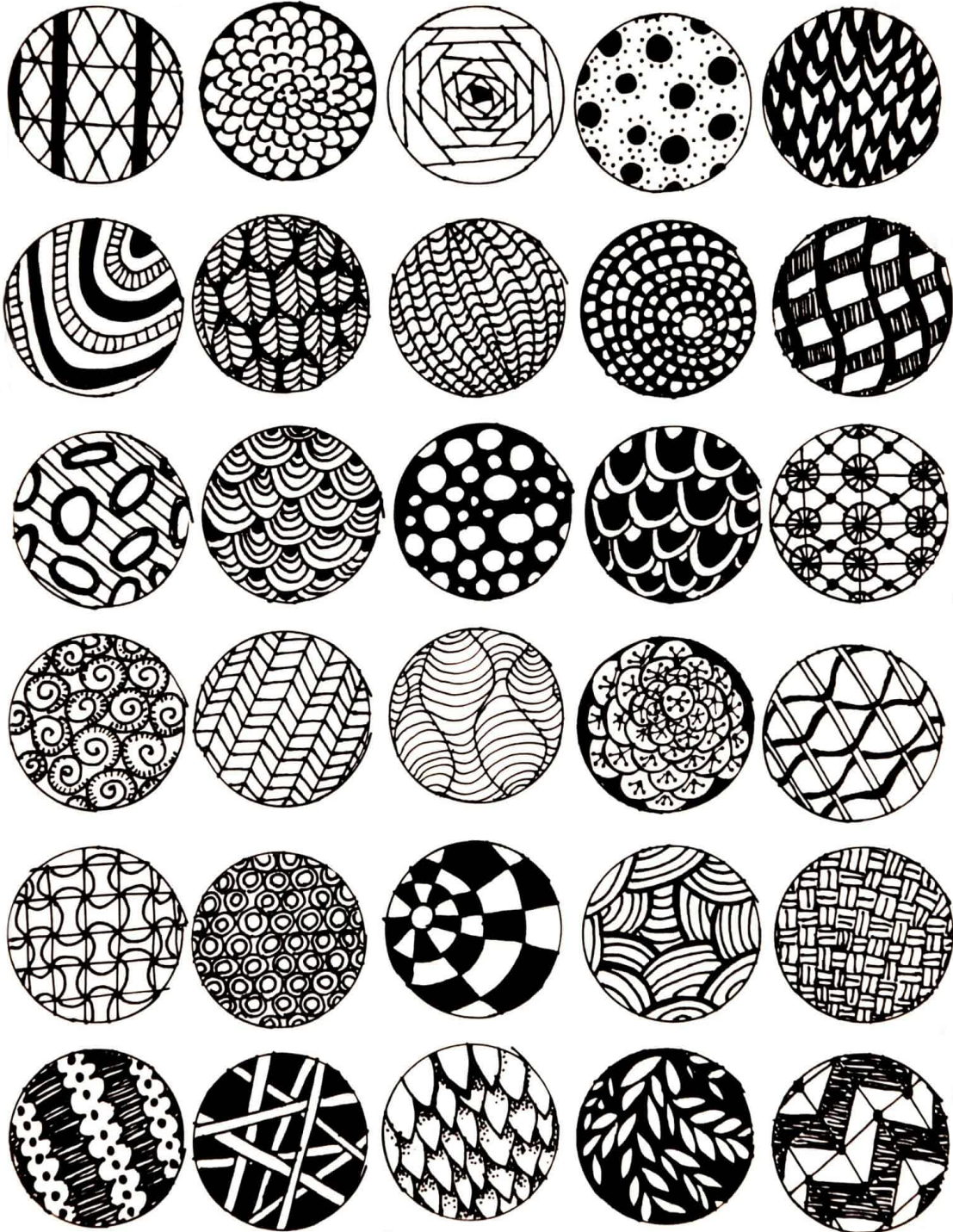




Find more mandala coloring pages [here](#)







## Zentangle Pattern Ideas

**CRAFT**  
*whack*

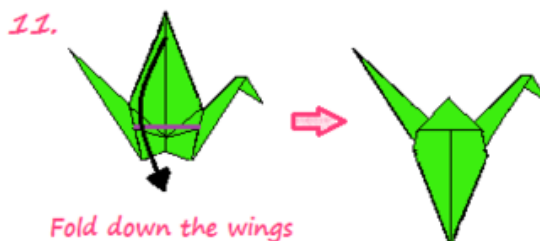
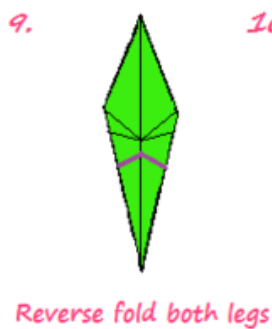
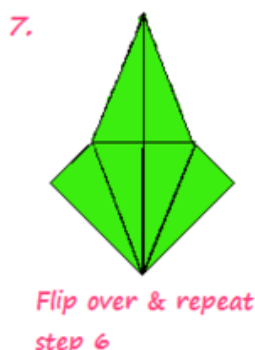
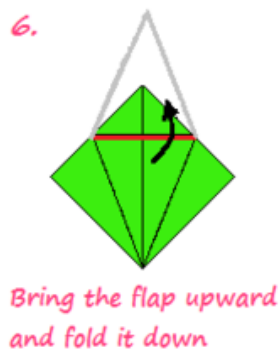
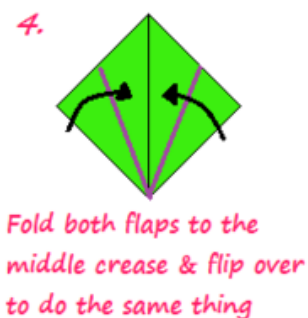
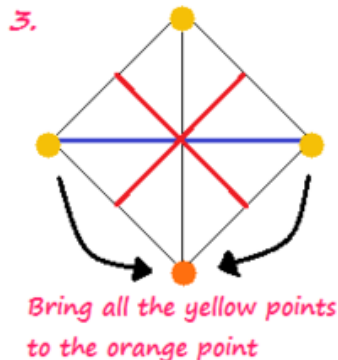
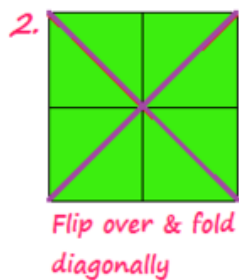
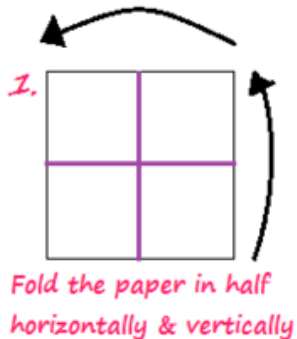
For more zentangle patterns, practice sheets, and to learn more about the benefits, [click here](#)





# Origami Crane

— = Vally Fold  
— = Mountain Fold



By: AmuTsukiyomi888

If you don't have square paper at home simply fold one corner down to the opposite side and cut away the excess

You can find a step-by-step video [here](#)

# Journal Prompts

- What has changed in your day-to-day life since COVID-19 became “a thing”?
- Which changes have caused the greatest imposition(s)? Which changes have led to the most distress? Which changes, if any, have been pleasantly surprising?
- What has been most difficult about being away from campus and social distancing?
- What you are grieving? What you have lost and what you have found in the midst of all this change?
- What positive changes can you identify in your life?
- What are you doing to help yourself through these times? What do you need more of in your life to help you feel better each day?
- How are you supporting your community and family? What are ways to reach out and connect with others right now?
- During this time what have you learned about yourself? Your family? Your community?

