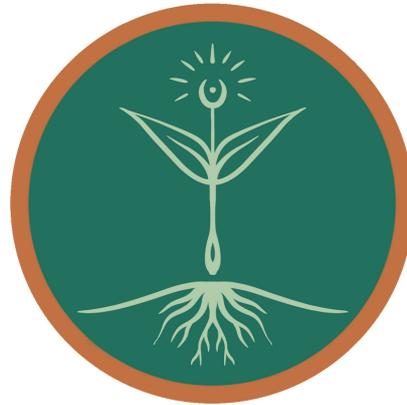


**ROOT & RISE THERAPEUTIC HORTICULTURE
PRESENTS:**



The Grounding Arts Series

The Grounding Arts Series is a selection of four nature- and art-based projects that encourage creativity and awareness of self, community, and place. The series is based on the practice of therapeutic horticulture, the process in which plant-based activities, both passive and active, are utilized to improve physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual well-being.

The goal of the series is to reduce physiological and psychological markers of stress, anxiety, and depression; to offer a renewed appreciation for ourselves and our place; and to increase personal resilience.

Though intended to be completed consecutively, each activity can be done "a la carte" and still be beneficial to participants. The series includes:

- Activity #1: Outdoor Mindfulness
- Activity #2: Nature Journals
- Activity #3: Nature Mandalas
- Activity #4: Mini Peace Gardens



Setting & Participants

The series is for everybody and everyone! These instructions are written for group participation, but activities can certainly be completed by individuals. You can complete the series alone, or with coworkers, clients, students, friends and family, or the community at-large. The series is suitable for keiki to kūpuna. While parts of the activities can be completed indoors or in a space with limited access to nature, the series is best executed in an outdoor setting, abundant with natural material.

Structure

One hour should be allotted for each session. Be sure to review the discussion points provided for each activity beforehand and address them throughout each activity.

Supplies

The activities utilize some recycled, recyclable, and natural material to reduce waste and to bring awareness to our environment. For activity kits or information on where to purchase supplies, please contact Root & Rise.

Support

View the instructional videos to supplement these written instructions. Please contact Root & Rise for support and facilitation of the series, and for more information about other services. Root & Rise offers a range of therapeutic horticulture programs and individualized garden design, installation, and maintenance for any setting.

Aliza McKeigue

website: rootandrisehawaii.com

e-mail: rootandrisehawaii@gmail.com

phone: 617-543-8065

facebook/instagram: [rootandrisehawaii](https://www.facebook.com/rootandrisehawaii)



Activity #1: Outdoor Mindfulness



Goals

- to practice mindfulness by using your senses and connecting with your natural surroundings

Supplies

- pens/pencils
- colored pencils/markers/crayons
- clipboard
- printed Outdoor Mindfulness worksheets (attached)

Instructions

1. Start by addressing the discussion point about mindfulness.
2. With worksheets, clipboard, and writing supplies in hand, find a space to yourself outdoors. Take a few deep breaths and notice what is around you.
3. Spend 15-30 minutes completing the "Sensing & Observing" and "Scavenger Hunt" worksheets using pens/pencils and colored pencils/crayons/markers. Walk around, explore the landscape, and remain quiet while completing.
4. Reconvene. Share your responses to the worksheets, and address and revisit the discussion points.

Discussion points

- *Mindfulness: What does mindfulness mean to you?* Mindfulness is the practice of focusing our awareness on the present moment. As we do this, we cultivate non-attachment and non-judgment; we accept any thoughts, feelings, or images that arise, and let go of what we can not control. We engage our senses and focus on the external world to draw us out of ruminative thinking about the past and future. In doing so, we are able to be present, and to relax and restore.
- *Where else could you practice this activity?*



OUTDOOR MINDFULNESS

Sensing & Observing

Fill in the blanks with words or drawings.



The sky looks...



The wind feels...



My feet are touching...





The sun is...



I hear...



The air smells like...



OUTDOOR MINDFULNESS

Scavenger Hunt

Walk around and observe. Circle what you find.



an animal

something shiny

something brown

something I can climb

a flower

something I could crawl under

something that flies

something red

a bug

seeds

something that looks like a "Y"

something soft

a shadow

a cloud

something straight

something sticky

something with a hole in it

a spiderweb

something yellow

the moon

a piece of bark

something crunchy

moss

a plant that is moving

something that is beautiful

a triangle

something round

something twisted

a chewed leaf

something smooth

something not on the list

a tiny rock

something wet



Activity #2: Nature Journals



Goals

- to find inspiration in nature
- to create an eco-friendly journal that can be used for expression and reflection

Supplies

- pens/pencils
- colored pencils/markers/crayons
- hole puncher
- 8.5 x 11 inch paper
- thin bamboo sticks (approximately 8" long, trimmed so that there are nodules at both ends)
- cardboard
- twine
- scissors
- tape or liquid glue
- journal template (attached)

Instructions

1. Explore the area and collect at least one natural element (i.e. stick, flower, rock, leaf). You can take a photo or mental note if you prefer. Be sure to address the discussion point about taking from nature before you explore. Once you've collected your natural element, put it to the side and keep it in mind.

2. Construct your journal.

a. First, cut out the journal template provided and punch holes as indicated.

b. Front & back cover: Trace the template on to the cardboard. Cut it out and punch holes as indicated. The holes should be on the left side of the cardboard: the "binding side." Repeat this step so you have two identical pieces of cardboard.



Nature Journals, continued

c. Pages: Take 5 pieces of paper and fold them in half so they are the same size as the front/back covers. The folded edge will be the binding side. Using the template, punch the two holes along the binding side. If you want more pages in your journal, repeat this step with one or more stacks of folded paper.

d. Align the pages between the front and back cover.

e. Cut two 1-ft. pieces of twine. Thread a piece of twine through one hole (of aligned front/back cover and pages) about halfway. Keep the twine there, with the twine and pieces steady and aligned, as you repeat this step for the second hole.

f. Align the bamboo with the binding side. Using the twine you've strung through the holes, tie knots around the bamboo to bind the journal. The bamboo nodules should be outside of the knots to keep the bamboo in place. The knots should be loose enough that you can open the journal with ease, but tight enough to keep the bamboo in place. Your journal is bound!

3. Customize your journal. Use your nature finding as inspiration for your journal. You can study it and write about it, sketch it, draw an abstract representation of it, or adhere it to your journal. Let your creativity flow; anything goes.

4. Address the remaining discussion points and share your journals.

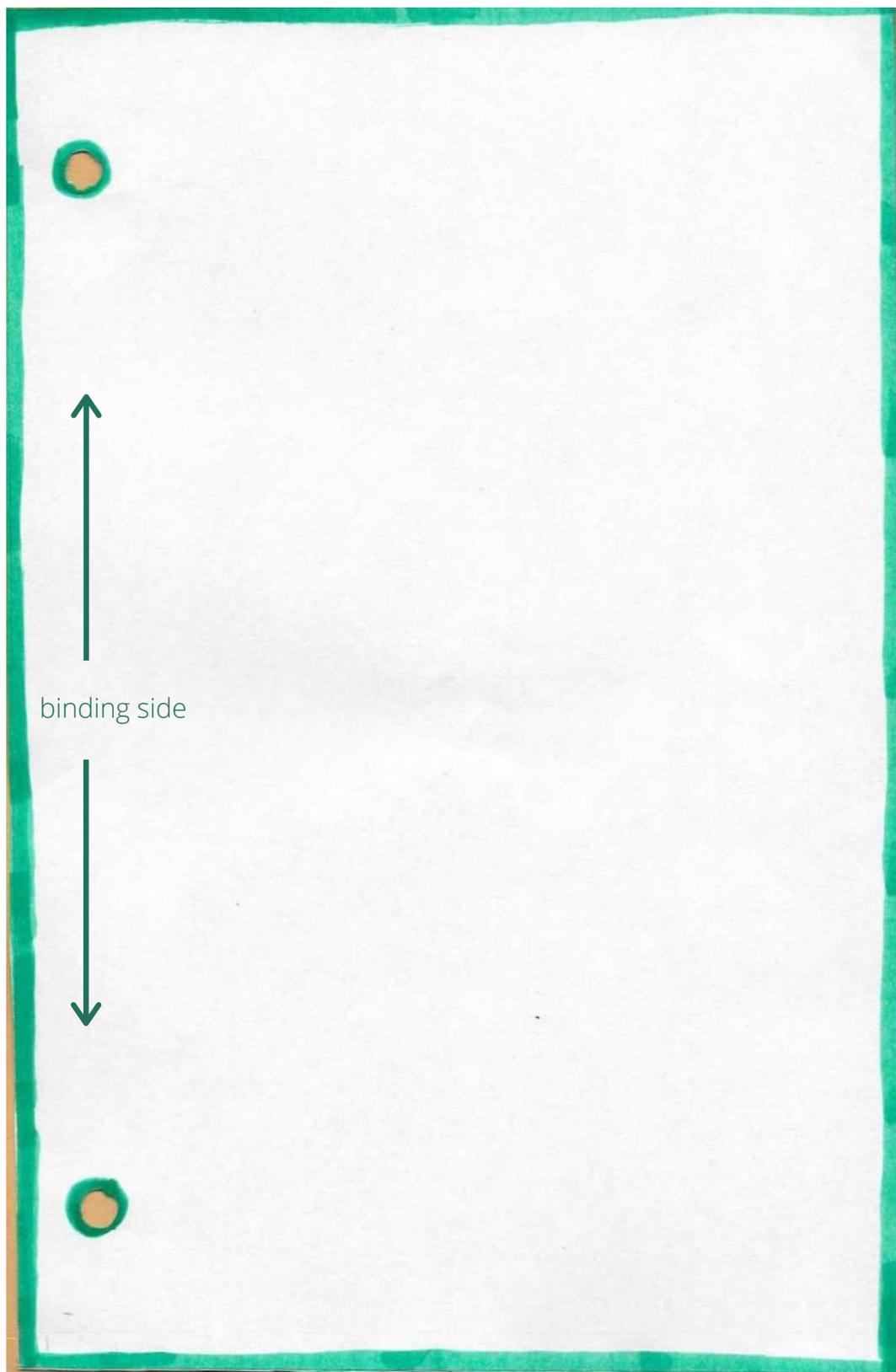
Discussion points

- Taking from nature: Be mindful and respectful about what you take from nature. If there isn't an abundance of the material, do not take it. If you are taking something living, like a leaf or flower, use gentle hands. Stabilize the stem with one hand and pinch (not pull) the material with the other hand to remove it.
- *Can you think of a natural setting or piece of nature you find beautiful, interesting, or inspiring?*
- *Where and how can you imagine yourself using this journal?*



Journal Template

Cut out and punch holes to use as a template for front/back cover and pages.



Activity #3: Nature Mandalas



Goals

- to connect with the concept of mandalas
- to recognize beauty in nature and create a unique, impermanent piece of art

Supplies

- large bowls or baskets

Instructions

1. Address the discussion point about mandalas and taking from nature. Walk around and collect at least 20 pieces of natural material in your bowl or basket. These might include leaves, sticks, flowers, rocks, seeds, grass, etc. Take at least 15 minutes to explore and gather.
2. Bring your findings to a place on the ground where you can create your mandala.
3. Using your findings, make a circle on the ground as big or as small as you like. Then make another circle inside or outside of the first. Fill in using the rest of your materials in a way that feels good. Take your time.
4. When you feel done, look at your mandala. *Do you like it? Do you want to change it?* Feel free to keep it as is or make changes. When the mandala is finally complete, take a minute to observe your mandala in silence.
5. Reconvene, address remaining discussion points, and walk around as a group to view everyone's mandalas. Allow time for each creator to share.



Discussion points

- *What is a mandala?* Mandalas are special circles used in many cultures throughout history and the world for healing and meditation. People make mandalas with paint, colorful sand, natural material, and more. Making and looking at mandalas help us relax, center, and find peace.
- *Taking from nature:* Be mindful and respectful about what you take from nature. If there isn't an abundance of the material, do not take it. If you are taking something living, like a leaf or flower, use gentle hands. Stabilize the stem with one hand and pinch (not pull) the material with the other hand to remove it.
- *Circles represent unity, completeness, and cycles. Where else in nature or life do you find circles and cycles?*
- *Impermanence means temporary, or will not last forever. This mandala you created is impermanent – the wind, sun, and rain will change its shape and eventually the mandala will not be here anymore. What else in nature and life is impermanent?*
- *Why did you design your mandala the way you did? What is your favorite part?*
- Another adaptation is to work collectively as a group to create a single mandala.



Activity #4: Mini Peace Gardens



Goals

- to nourish the creative mind
- to interact with a variety of plants and soil
- to address plant care and self-care

Supplies

- second-hand bowl, dish, or cup
- assorted succulents
- succulent potting mix
- decorative pieces: sea glass, stones, mosaic pieces, shells, driftwood, etc.
- water spray bottle

Instructions

1. Address discussion point about what plants and humans need to survive.
2. Browse materials to get your creativity flowing. Choose a bowl/dish/cup.
3. Fill the dish with soil about 1/2" from the rim of the bowl.
4. Considering how you want your garden to look, choose one or more succulents.
5. Using your fingers, make holes in the soil where you want to plant the succulents. Holes should be deep enough for roots to sit, but shallow enough so roots can continue to grow downward and outward. Plants can sit close together, but remember they will grow and take up more space.
6. Remove succulents from pots by turning the pot upside-down, squeezing gently, and catching with your palm.



Mini Peace Garden, continued

6. Shake off excess soil and place the succulent into the holes. You can try different arrangements to see what you like best.
7. Cover the roots with soil and firm into place with your fingers. The final soil level in your dish should be even throughout.
8. Explore the decorative items and add them to your garden.
9. When complete, spray your garden to moisten the succulents and soil.
10. Address the discussion points about caring for your garden. Share your creations and revisit discussion points.

Discussion points

- *What do plants and humans need to survive?* Plants require water, soil, sun, and quality air to survive and thrive. Similarly, humans need water, food, shelter, fresh air. When you care for your garden, you are helping it stay healthy and survive. Let your garden remind you to practice self-care. *What is something you can do daily as self-care?*
- *Caring for your garden: succulents are in the cactus family. They are drought-tolerant and can survive in bright sun with warm temperatures. Check your garden daily, both visually and tactilely. Let the soil get rather dry before watering; be careful not to overwater. Where will you place your garden?*
- *Why did you design your garden the way you did?*

