PERSPECTIVE ‘05: MANDALAS AND FLORAL MEDITATIONS

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It is an established fact that our daily lives are becoming more hurried and filled with more deadlines. New technologies may help us “keep the pace” but in turn they actually increase the pace! We are overlooking opportunities to stop and reflect, to feel, to appreciate the simple things around us like nature and art.

This design exercise requires each student to “put on the brakes,” to stop and look into a work of art...to think about it...to respond to it. After selecting a work of art from Dr. David Rosen’s collection of mandalas, each student has the opportunity to get acquainted with it and respond to it with his or her own personal design. The student’s response may be designed for wall, pedestal, floor or suspension. It may include any kind of natural or man-made material, but something vegetative must be used.

Creating a “solution” in this way can help students learn about art, nature and themselves. It can bolster self-confidence, increase self-esteem and plant the seeds for creative problem solving later on in life.

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Mandala means “sacred circle” in Sanskrit. The circle is a symbol of wholeness and harmony. Developmentally children spontaneously draw mandalas between the ages of three and five. Mandalas are often drawn by emotionally disturbed individuals when they are centering and recovering.

Mandalas are created by Tibetan Buddhists and also used by them and other Buddhists for meditation and contemplation. Creating mandalas involve “active imagination,” a technique in Jungian psychotherapy, which can connect us with spiritual energy from the unconscious and lead to self-awareness and understanding. Mandalas can also awaken us to the unfolding mysteries of the soul. In addition, creating mandalas can help us restore balance and find meaning in our lives.

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