



MAKING MINDFUL ART

WITH AMY MARICLE
OF MINDFUL ART STUDIO







Dear Wonderful, Creative You:

Hi! I'm Amy, founder and artist at Mindful Art Studio. I'm so excited that you are joining me for this playful adventure into the world of mindful art making. **I want to set your mind at ease - this activity requires no special training in art or mindfulness.**

That's the beauty of it - come as you are, and at every step, there's an opportunity to drop into the moment in a very relaxed way. **I'll lead you step by step - and you are invited to use what works for you, and leave behind anything that does not.** This is your art practice, after all.

I hope that you find some tidbits in this workshop that feed your art practice, as well as your soul. I've found mindful art making to be an incredibly satisfying way to make art. It's one that I approach in a playful way, and I invite you to do the same. (That's why we are here, isn't it?)

Let's begin this mindful art adventure with high flow paints!

Creatively Yours,

Amy

What is mindful art?

Let's start by defining what mindfulness means. Mindfulness means focusing non-judgmentally on one thought or sensation rather than allowing your mind to flutter aimlessly here and there.

You can be mindful in anything you do. You can walk, talk, cook, or even shower mindfully. MINDFULNESS is experiencing the moment you are IN. **We can make art mindfully and reap the benefits.**

Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way* says it like this: “**Attention is an act of connection.**” And for me, it seems that if we can feel more connected by paying attention to our art making - both the process and the meaning in the images. That's a powerful anecdote against hopelessness, desperation, and suffering.

There are days I am carefree or playful in my art, and end up in a peaceful state of flow. Other days I'm very mindful and intentional, but I end up with a muddy-looking painting and a feeling of frustration. **Observing myself and my feelings non-judgmentally is part of my mindful art practice,** and part of what helps me enjoy the process, even when I dislike the product.

What to notice in mindful art making

It can be easy to feel distracted by critical thoughts about your art, your to do list, or thoughts of other things you'd rather be doing. Here's a little cheat sheet of some things you can tune into while you are art making to help you focus on the moment:

Notice your 5 senses:

- **Feel:** What does the marker feel like in your hand? Is it cool or warm, hard or soft? Smooth or rough? Does it glide on the paper or is there resistance? Are you slouching or upright? Is there a feeling of comfort or tightness in your grip? What about your shoulders? Your stomach?
- **See:** What are the colors and shapes you notice appearing before you? What does it remind you of? Can you look at what is appearing with curiosity instead of judgment about its "quality?"
- **Hear:** What's the sound of the paint brush on the canvas? Is it a scratching, a nearly silent gentle touch? Or does the paint tube squirt like a ketchup bottle? Are you also listening to music? Can you hear your breathing?
- **Smell:** What is the smell of the paint, clay, or marker?
- **Taste:** Are you drinking coffee or water while you work? What do you notice about it?

Notice Your Thoughts: As with other forms of mindfulness meditation, you can acknowledge thoughts that arise in a non-judgmental way. This is another way to begin letting go of your "inner critic's" need to insult your work and get in the way of art making.

Notice Your Feelings: There are days I am carefree or playful in my art, and end up in a peaceful state of flow. Other days I'm very mindful and intentional, but I end up with a muddy-looking painting and a feeling of frustration. Observing myself and my feelings non-judgmentally is part of my mindful art practice, and part of what helps me enjoy the process, even when I dislike the product.

I would invite you to think about art making as self-care. You deserve to relax and let go through your art. Give yourself that permission.



How to create a mindful art practice

WHEN TO DO MINDFUL ART:

- Just after you eat breakfast or lunch
- When you first wake up
- After work
- When your kids are napping
- When you need a break at work for a few minutes
- Schedule time for art into your calendar just like any other meeting or plan

HOW TO TEMPT YOURSELF TO MAKE ART

- Leave a pen and art journal on your counter, dining table, work desk, bedside table, or in your car.
- Keep a pen and small art journal in your bag.
- Leave your journal open so that when you walk by it, you are enticed to draw more.
- Set a timer for 5 - 10 minutes if that's all the time you have. You'll feel better for it.
- Clean up your art space to make it inviting.

- Organize your art supplies to make it easy to access them.
- Invite a friend over to make mindful art and have an “art date.”

DIVE DEEPER INTO THE PROCESS:

- Set a timer for 5 minutes.
- Free write about your experience with mindful art - just write whatever comes to mind. Sometimes it helps to start with a particular sentence. You might start your free writing this way: “My experience with the Mindful Art workshop today was ...”
- When the timer goes off, stop.
- Underline words and phrases that stand out, then cut them out of your page. Create a loose poem with your words and phrases to create a poem.

Focus on process over product

Like any other practice, mindful art making is a practice, not something you perfect. You should expect to lose your way. **Strive for moments of mindfulness and give yourself space to melt into the moment**, focusing on the process of creating. Give yourself permission to be absorbed in the sounds, smells, and sensations of making art. Let go of perfection in the art product and enjoy the process.

You might find it helpful to keep a little sign on your art table that reminds you to tune in through the senses.

I hope you enjoy your art making and can tune into the process. It's a real gift in my life and I hope I've offered it to you.

Creatively Yours,

Amy

CREATIVE RESOURCES

Helpful posts for further creative exploration:

[The Big Power of Working Small](#)

[The Simple Art Technique I Just Can't Stop Doing](#)

[Trusting the Process: Notes From an Intuitive Art Journaling Class](#)

[Blending Art and Writing in Your Intuitive Art Journal](#)

Learn with Mindful Art Studio classes:

[The Inspiring Sketchbook](#)

[Art Journaling 101](#)

[Fluid Art](#)

[Freeing the Muse](#)