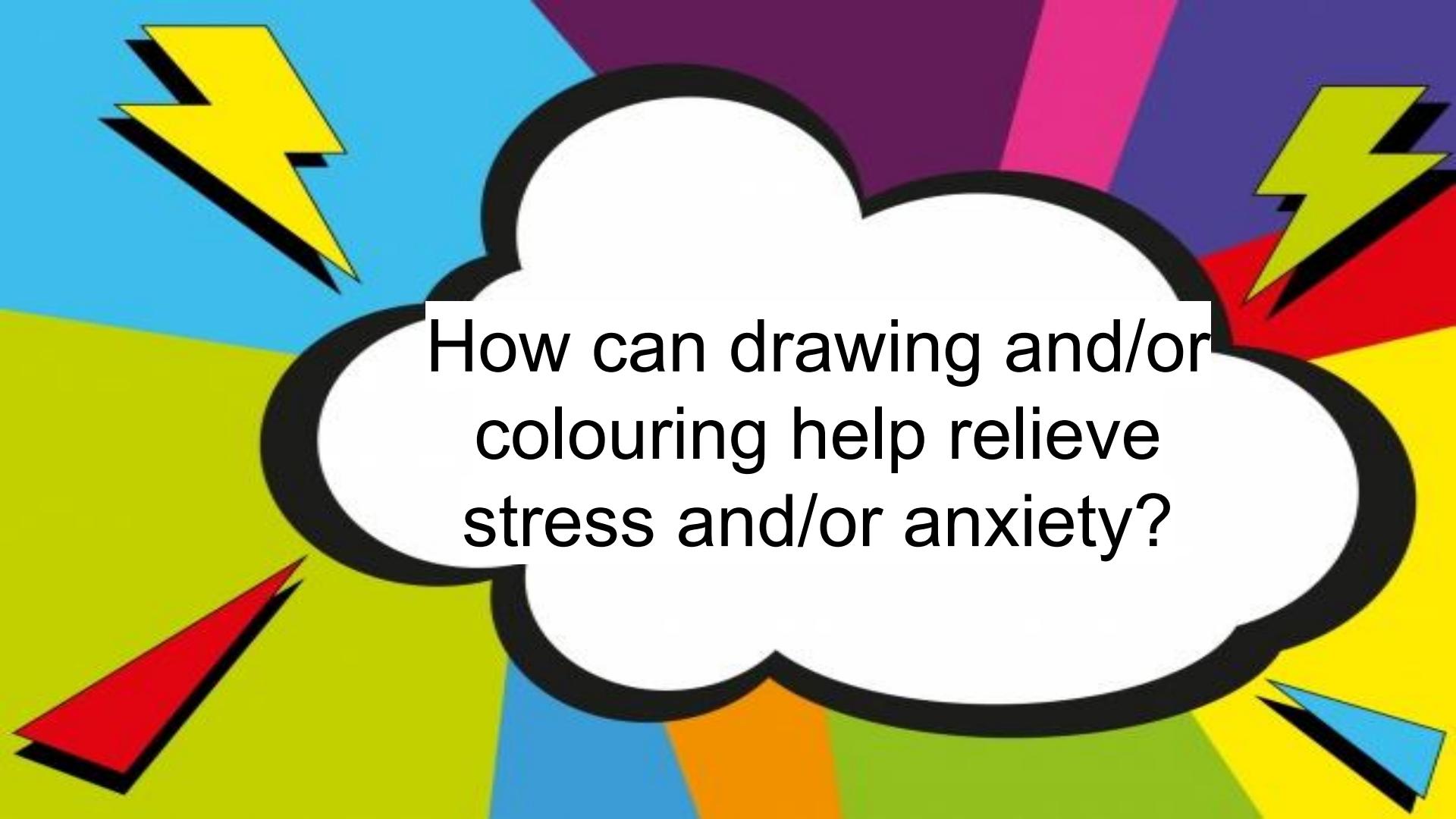


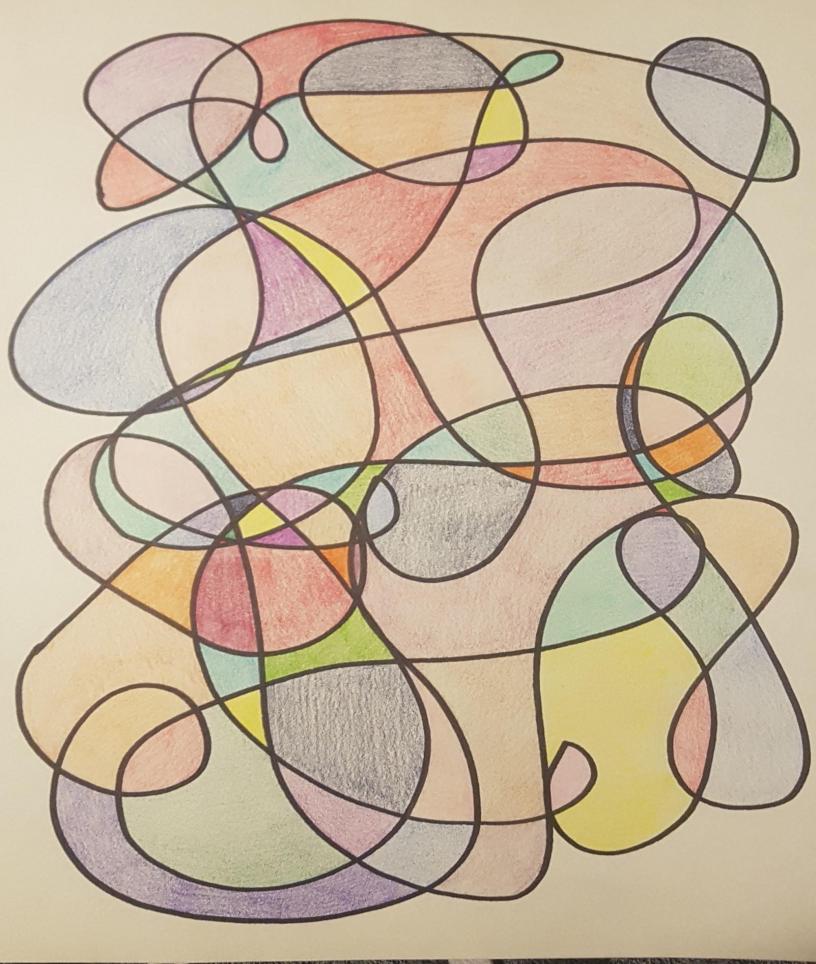


Inquiry Project

Kendra Audette



How can drawing and/or
colouring help relieve
stress and/or anxiety?



For the first week I have divided to do something simple, but also in the direction of how I am feeling. I have used the scribbles because with school and what is happening right now is very chaotic. I also added colour to the scribbled lines to make it look more appealing.

Week One: February 7-13, 2021

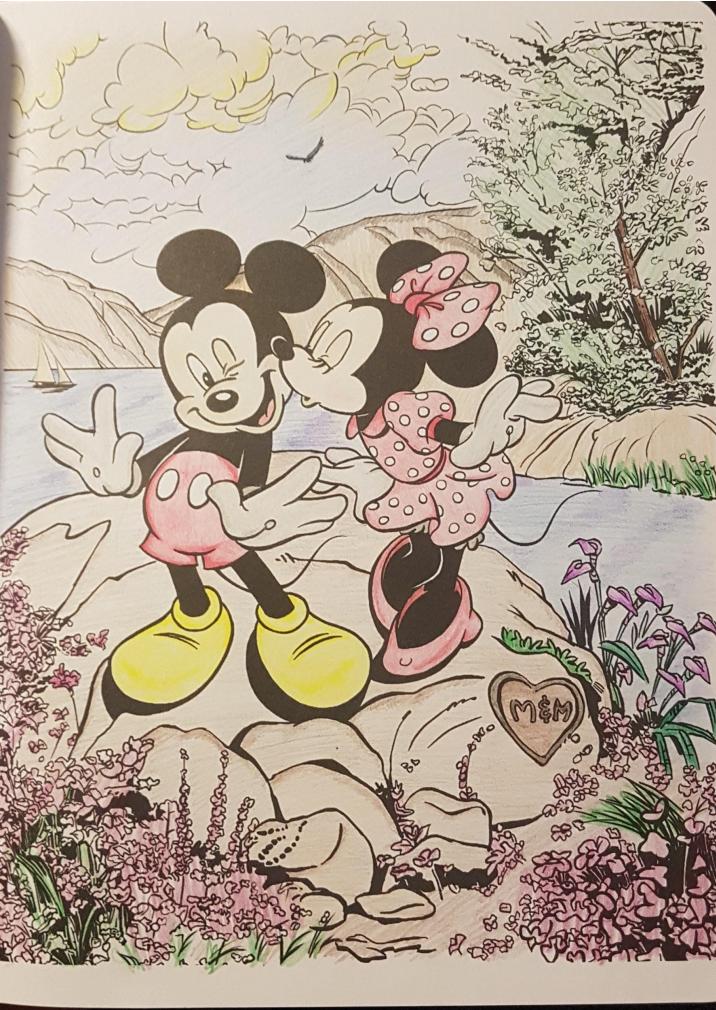


I chose to colour a page out of my colouring book this week. It is a large zentangle that covers the whole page. This took me about two to three hours in total by figuring out what colours I wanted and making sure I did not use the same colour twice. I pressed down on some colours to make them appear darker and others lighter. This made some things pop more in the colours.

Week Two: February 14-20, 2021

Research For Week One and Two

In the article *Sharpen Your Pencils: preliminary Evidence that Adult Coloring Reduces Depressive Symptoms and Anxiety* They are doing research about if adult colouring books really do reduce stress and anxiety and increased mindfulness and wellbeing. They took 115 women between 18 and 38 years old for seven days. For seven days these women were given puzzle books and colouring books, and than later that night they would fill out a survey indicating their levels of depression, stress, anxiety, resilience, flourishing, and mindfulness. At the end their table was shown that “participants in the coloring group showed significant reductions in symptoms of depression.” They showed an increase in mindfulness but no improvement in resilience. This study shows that there is short term improvements in depressive symptoms and anxiety.



When I chose to colour this I was actually watching a Disney movie! The colouring was hard, because the lines and shapes were somewhat small. Near the end when I started to get to the grass, trees, and flowers I got impatient and just kinda scribbled it in. When I focused on Mickey and Minnie Mouse I took a lot of time choosing colours and shading them so that they could have some shape to their body. I finished this colouring page when I finished my movie. This experience left me feeling calm, and somewhat frustrated because I just wanted to be done with colouring the “unimportant stuff”

Week Three: February 21-27, 2021

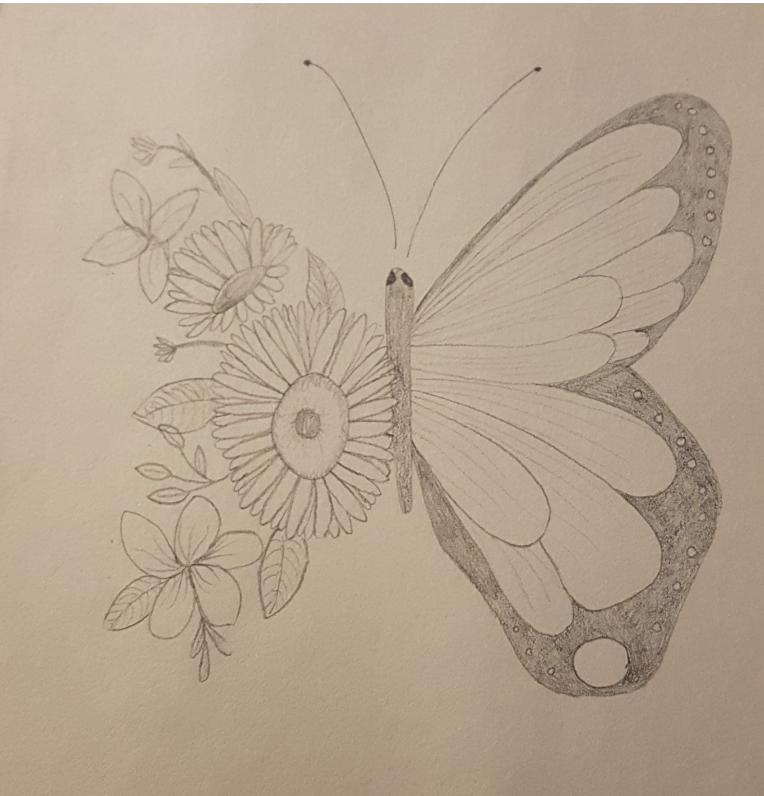


This week I asked my buddy for ideas on what to draw. She told me to draw my astrology sign. Then I went on pinterest to find a few images and get a couple ideas flowing through my brain. I then picked up my pencil and started drawing the outlines of my fishies and went from there. When I started time seemed to fly by very quickly and I started to remember the old days. The old days where I used to draw and paint and ask for artistic stuff for my birthday and christmas. It was just on old memory and I felt like I found my passion again. It all just made me really happy. Although I still feel like something is missing from my drawing, but I just don't know what it is.

Week Four: March 1-6, 2021

Research For Week Three and Four

In the article *Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Coloring for University Students' Test Anxiety* says that “33% of students are likely to experience test anxiety.” Coloring mandalas creates an arts based activity and mindfulness meditation. When coloring 20 minutes prior to the exam it reduced anxiety in a lot of people before taking their exam. Coloring shows a sign of calmness, and mindfulness that before taking an exam getting your head space out of thinking about the exam really helps with anxiety before taking the exam. Just remember there are always other ways to test people's knowledge other than a test.



Week Five: March 7-13, 2021

When I was trying to figure out what to draw I thought of my grandma's tattoo. She has a butterfly on her thigh and I have always wanted the same tattoo as she has but also some uniqueness to it. So I drew one side of a butterfly wing and the other side of flowers because I love drawing flowers and it symbolizes my grandma. When ever I went to stay at her house for a week we would always be tending to the garden and this just reminds me of her. It put a smooth thought inside my head and whenever I draw it takes my mind off of everything that is going on inside my head. It is something that I want to do to get my mind off of things or simply just to get back into my hobby that I used to love doing so much.



With this colouring page I was just flipping through one of my colouring books and decided this is what I want to colour for the week. This one was very quick, but still as I said before it takes my mind off of things for the meantime. Taking a picture of the colouring page does not suffice the use of colours. It is hard to tell but I used a variety of colours to make certain things pop out and to make it look not so bland.

Research For Week Five and Six

In the article *Feeling Down and Understanding Depression* it talks about how people who have depression do not always experience the same thing, but all people do feel sadness and cannot enjoy themselves. With a person with learning disabilities this tends to be much more upsetting since they have a harder time describing their feelings. Some people may actually deny it all together, and find an unhealthy way to cope with it. Speak to someone you know, speak to someone outside your team you trust, socialise and going out are all helpful tips for people with learning disabilities, not only can they use it but so can everyone with depression. There are so many natural ways to help yourself, you just need to be willing to put in the work and admit you need help.



I really enjoyed colouring this one. It took a lot of episodes of Desperate Housewives to finish this coloring page. It took twenty-two colours and I never used the same colour on the same thing.

Week Seven: March 21-27, 2021



Week Eight: March 28 - April 3, 2021

During this painting I had started it during the christmas break and never gotten around to finishing it, but for week eight and a little bit of week nine I started painting this again. The numbers are extremely small and hard to read sometimes, but you eventually figure it out. I would be sitting at my desk and watching netflix and hours and hours would pass and then next thing I knew I haven't looked at my phone for 5 hours. It was almost like I had just forgotten about the whole world and I got out of my head and did my own thing. It was the best feeling in the world especially since all final projects and exams are starting to be due. I have been stressed and filled with anxiety for the past few days, but when I was painting this I forgot all about everything, it was amazing.

Research For Week Seven and Eight

In the article *3 Reasons Adult Coloring Can Actually Relax Your Brain* it says that colouring is a simple activity that takes us outside of our head. It simply relaxes the brain so the person is not stressing or thinking about the things that mentally are not good for them. Coloring distracts the brain from the real world. That is why when I was colouring so much time was passing and I didn't even notice it. Art therapy has been used for many years now and has been successful as well. Art therapy does not only help with depression and anxiety, it helps with lowering the symptoms of cancer or alzheimer's disease, and trauma. It is helping with all this things in such a natural way all because we are simply taking our brain away from the real world for a few hours.

Unrelated Information

I was originally going to do 10 pictures and 10 slides worth of research, but that became to much for me and looking for 10 articles about my topic was getting hard. Instead I resorted to doing 4 articles and combine my weeks. Instead of doing 10 colouring or drawing I am doing 8 because finals and all my assignments were building up and I felt that if I were to do something it would not turn out very good, because I was more focused on my other assignments.

My Process and Key Learnings

At the beginning of this project I was totally dreading it, but by week four I started to realize it actually made me happy. It felt like I was doing something that I enjoyed again and took my focus off of school for a little while. At the end by week 8 I started finishing my painting project that I had started during Christmas break and put it away once school started. Hopefully I will be able to finish it because time flies when I am doing this project and it is highly one of my favorite pieces to do during this learning process.

I knew that coloring and drawing increased levels of happiness, and increases a person's mood, but I did not know how much colouring was affected by depression and anxiety. It is a healthier and easier way to manage stress, depression, and anxiety. I believe that drawing and colouring can help for a short term resolution, but I am not sure about a long term resolution. I would need to keep exploring it myself. Kind of do my own study.

Resources

Carsley, Dana, & Heath, Nancy L. (2020). Effectiveness of mindfulness-based coloring for university students' test anxiety. *Journal of American College Health*, 68(5), 518-527.

Cronin, Peter, Peyton, Liam, & Chaplin, Eddie. (2017). Feeling down and understanding depression. *Advances in Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities*, 11(1), 2-7.

Flett, Jayde A. M, Lie, Celia, Riordan, Benjamin C, Thompson, Laura M, Conner, Tamlin S, & Hayne, Harlene. (2017). Sharpen Your Pencils: Preliminary Evidence that Adult Coloring Reduces Depressive Symptoms and Anxiety. *Creativity Research Journal*, 29(4), 409-416.

Team, B. A. (2020, September 21). 3 Reasons Adult Coloring Can Actually Relax Your Brain. Retrieved from <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/3-reasons-adult-coloring-can-actually-relax-brain/>