

## Color Your Favorite!

Pages 7 & 15 feature coloring images for your entertainment.

### A POPULAR ADULT HOBBY

Coloring books are no longer just child's play. In recent years, adult coloring books have flown off of the shelves at craft retailers and bookstores, turning what was once a niche hobby into a popular and lucrative trend.

Studies show that coloring can have calming and therapeutic effects. In fact, researchers at Johns Hopkins University suggest coloring as an alternative to meditation. This form of art therapy can relax the mind and help a person learn more about oneself in the process.

All types of coloring can stimulate a person's creative juices while

simultaneously strengthening his or her mental well-being. Experts who study the impact coloring has on adults have found coloring involves both logic and creativity. This activates the areas of the cerebral cortex in the brain involved in vision and fine motor skills. The relaxation that coloring provides lowers the activity of the amygdala, the part of the brain that controls emotions.

Participants who color can find tranquility quite easily. Marygrace Berberian, a certified art therapist and Clinical Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator for the Graduate Art Therapy Program at New York University, has said, "Coloring definitely has therapeutic potential to reduce anxiety, create

focus or bring about more mindfulness."

Adults interested in coloring have a substantial catalog of adult coloring books at their disposal. Start with something relatively easily by coloring mandalas, or circles filled

with other geometric shapes. Intricate designs are hallmarks of adult coloring books, including fine art and design-themed coloring books. Therefore, it's best to invest in a quality set of colored pencils for a greater level of precision.

**Did you know?** Children have long been drawn to expressing themselves through art. According to developmental experts, coloring stimulates creativity, contributes to better handwriting, teaches color recognition, and can promote hand-eye coordination. Coloring books can help children learn to recognize boundaries and structure and develop spatial awareness. Adults, too, have recognized the benefits that coloring can bring, which includes stress reduction and improved focus. Crayons have long been a favorite tool for coloring, and over the years certain colors have emerged as fan favorites. Crayola® conducted polls in 1993 and 2000 to find out the most popular colors of crayons in America. Blue was voted the favorite both times. Six other shades of blue, including cerulean, midnight blue, aquamarine, periwinkle, denim and blizzard blue, finished among the top 10. Purple heart, caribbean green and cerise rounded out the top 10.

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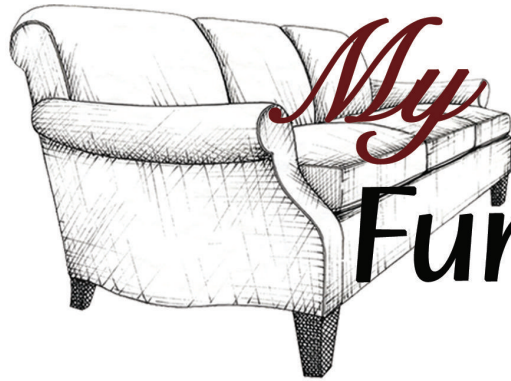


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