



The Colors of Calm

Art and Mindfulness Workshop Lessons

Produced by ALMAAHH

Supported and funded in part by the Texas Women's Foundation

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- Alenka Cardenas
- Meredith Harrison
- Claudia I. Macias
- Vanessa Perez Ortega
- Melissa Rose Tylinski

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Introduction

The Colors of Calm project brings together the transformative power of art, mindfulness, and emotional well-being. At its heart is a simple but profound belief: that creative expression can be a tool for healing, self-discovery, and resilience. Through these artist-led workshops, students are invited to explore their inner world, express complex emotions, and build a deeper connection to themselves and others—all through hands-on, engaging art experiences.

This booklet was created to make these workshop lessons widely available to educators, facilitators, and young artists alike. Each workshop was designed by a Houston-based teaching artist, blending personal narrative, cultural identity, and therapeutic approaches to art-making. Whether used in classrooms, after-school programs, or community spaces, these lessons offer a flexible, approachable way to integrate art and mental wellness.

We are deeply grateful to The Texas Cultural Trust for their support through the Texas Women's for the Arts grant, for generously funding part of this project and helping make this resource possible.

Workshops were created by the following artists and educators:

- **Jatziri Barrón**
- **Alenka Cardenas**
- **Meredith Harrison**
- **Claudia I. Macías**
- **Vanessa Perez Ortega**
- **Melissa Rose Tylinski**

Together, they have contributed meaningful, accessible tools to inspire calm, confidence, and creativity in students of all ages.

About ALMAAHH

ALMAAHH was established in 2021 with a bold vision to create a community-rooted, safe, and shared space where US Latinos can explore, research, discuss, connect, convey, and showcase their Latinidad through arts and culture.

The arts and culture complex will include visual art galleries and performance, artistic, maker, educational, culinary, and reading and research spaces surrounding a Zocalo. It will create a serene and safe environment offering comfort, inspiration, and a feeling of home. It will foster creative collaborations, attract a diverse array of artists, and underscore the vital role of art in society, positioning Houston as a vibrant center for Latino cultural expression.

Until its permanent arts and culture complex is open, ALMAAHH will continue to expand its partnerships with artistic and cultural venues, scholars, and experts, setting the standard for a leading global arts organization. ALMAAHH is a community of learning, leading the voyage to understand the US Latino experience that all generations can understand, witness, and be inspired to claim as their legacy.

WORKSHOPS

Bead to Bloom

Instructor: Vanessa Perez Ortega

Workshop Overview

Summary: The workshop will lead students through the process of creating **beaded sculptures using metal wire and small glass beads**. The process is meditative, open, and experiential since the materials allow students to follow the floral template or make a sculpture of their own design. As workshop leader, you can handle all the wire manipulations if any child has difficulties but this has only been the case with children younger than 4.

Workshop Length: Approximately 1.5 hours

Materials (per student)

Assortment of small glass beads: 8-15 beads per petal / 5-10 petals per flower (50 beads per flower; ~150 beads total)

- Thin metal wire: any color, 3 10-12” strips per student
- Individual cloth work mats: 1 per student

Shared/Instructor Materials:

- Small metal pliers: for workshop leader only
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Prep Notes

Pre-cut the wire for students into 10-12” strips and tightly coil one end to hold the beads for the first petal. Encourage students to leave at least 1” of wire at the end of the bloom to close the sculpture.

Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

This workshop is inspired by traditional french floral beading, a design technique which uses tiny glass beads to create intricate floral patterns that adorn other accessories or clothing. This style of beading has influenced many different art forms including Mexican embroidery especially when blended with traditional forms of construction such as brocade or zapotec weaving resulting in beautiful designs largely representing the local animals, nature, and culture.

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Before starting on the exercise, lead students through a quick color theory exercise to assist in their selection of color scheme. Briefly introduce them to the color wheel and point out primary, secondary, and tertiary color groups to demonstrate how all the colors relate. Then explain color harmonies through showing complimentary, analogous, and monochromatic schemes. They should be thinking not only about which colors will go together on each flower but how the composition for each flower will interact with the other blooms in their bouquet.

If time permits, the group can have a conversation about color psychology and get input from students about how each color evokes a different emotion for them. These are all elements at their disposal that can be used to craft a story about their floral arrangement which will be shared at the end of the activity.

MAIN ACTIVITY

(steps 1-3 can be prepped by teacher)

1. Place out individual cloth mats for each student
2. Pre-cut wire to 10-12” length, the younger the children the shorter the wire for their safety
3. Tightly coil one end of the wire
4. Have students select the color scheme of their bouquet and provide the beads for their first flower. Each flower requires ~50 beads, you may eyeball this.
5. Have students thread the first 8-10 beads and have them consider the pattern it will make when you close the petal with a loop and both ends touch each other to create the stem of the petal.
6. Continue creating petals until you have at least 5 of them
7. Once a student nears the end of their wire, minimum 1”, you may use the pliers to close the flower for them. Best practice is to thread the leftover wire through the coil twice. If students are advanced (highschool) they may thread their own wire and can place a larger bead in the middle to serve as the center of the flower.
8. Repeat for 2 more flowers
9. At any point, students can venture away from this floral pattern and explore the creation of any beaded sculpture of their choosing. Encourage leaving 1” for proper closure.

Some additional points to consider:

- Introduce and explain techniques, color concepts, and cultural relevance.
 - Encourage reflection and experimentation.
 - Encourage students to personalize their work with their own interpretations.
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Discussion & Reflection

Reflection questions:

- How was the process of creating the first petal compared to the last petal?
 - How did you choose your color scheme?
 - What feelings do you want your bouquet to evoke?
 - Will you create more beaded sculptures in the future, if so what?
-

Closing Activity

Ask students to write a haiku about their flowers before participating in a group share-out of their creations. This will allow students to engage in a moment of reflection and mindfully curate words that authentically describe the arrangement and process.

A haiku can be written by any student groups that have learned what syllables are and are shown that it is only a three lined poem with a 5-7-5 structure.

Extending the Lesson Beyond the Classroom

- Encourage students to continue creating beaded sculptures at home and even explore adhering them to their clothing and accessories, similarly to the folk artisans who popularized the beading technique.

Instructor Notes & Adaptations

This activity is very easy to adjust for different learning environments since each step can be tailored to consider various degrees of accessibility. The most important factor to consider is what choices are students able to make and allow them to make those: i.e. color selection, threading, writing and reflecting.



Unleashing Self-Expression Through Watercolor and Ink

Instructor: Meredith Harrison

Workshop Overview

Summary: This project will guide participants through creating abstract artwork using watercolor blotches as a foundation and overlaying them with black fine-point pen to add detail and definition. The focus will be on the process of self-expression rather than creating representational images.

Workshop Length: Approximately 1.5 hours

Materials (per student)

- Watercolor paper: 1 sheet (9"x12" or larger)
- Watercolor paints: variety of colors (tubes, pans, or liquid)
- Brushes: 2–3 sizes
- Paper towel: 1–2 sheets
- Water container: 1
- Water
- Palette or mixing surface: 1
- Black permanent pen: 1 (fine liner, felt-tip, or ballpoint)
- Pencil: 1 (optional)
- Eraser: 1 (optional)

Shared/Instructor Materials:

- Sink access
- Masking tape
- Hair dryer: 1–2 per classroom

Prep Notes

Supplies and materials laid out in the room and set-up so that participants can easily have all materials readily available.

Prep Notes

Supplies and materials laid out in the room and set-up so that participants can easily have all materials readily available.

Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

Guided Meditation (Optional): A short guided meditation focusing on feelings and emotions can help participants connect with their inner selves before starting the creative process.

Scribble Exercise: Participants create quick, loose scribbles on paper, focusing on different types of lines (wavy, jagged, spiral) to loosen up and activate their creative muscles.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Watercolor Blotches

1. Discuss the emotional associations of different colors. Ask students which colors represent their feelings.
2. Demonstrate blotching techniques on wet and dry paper, including dripping, flicking, and layering.
3. Encourage students to experiment freely, create blotches on their paper, and explore how colors blend and interact.
4. Let the paintings dry naturally or with a hairdryer.

Ink Expression

1. Once the blotches are dry, prompt students to observe their abstract forms. Ask: “What do you see? What feelings or images appear to you?”
 2. Demonstrate various pen techniques—line variation, stippling, cross-hatching, and abstract mark-making.
 3. Students add expressive outlines, shapes, textures, and patterns to their watercolor backgrounds.
 4. Encourage personal interpretation: they can highlight shapes they see, add imagined characters, or reinforce emotion through line and detail.
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Discussion & Reflection

Reflection questions:

- How does the artwork make you feel, and what is something that it could express about you? (encourage students to write associated words on the back of their artwork)
- What emotions or thoughts did you experience while creating your artwork?
- How does the choice of colors and materials reflect your personal story or message?
- What challenges did you face during the creative process, and how did you overcome them?
- In what ways does your artwork connect with or differ from your previous works?
- How do you hope viewers will interpret or feel about your finished piece?

Closing Activity

- Participants who are comfortable can share their artwork and their reflections with the group.
 - Encourage participants to write an artist statement about their work of art.
 - Here are five sentence stems to help beginner artists craft their statements about their artwork:
 - “My artwork is inspired by...”
 - “Through my creative process, I aim to...”
 - “The materials I use in my work are...”
 - I want my art to create a feeling of...”
 - “This piece represents..”
-

Extending the Lesson Beyond the Classroom

- Encourage more experimentation with different techniques and materials. Challenge students to explore more complex themes and emotions.
 - Explore different color palettes and their emotional associations.
 - Experiment with different types of pens and ink.
 - Incorporate other media, such as collage or mixed media
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Instructor Notes & Adaptations

For Beginners: Provide more guidance on basic watercolor and pen techniques. Offer prompts and suggestions for inspiration.

For Advanced Learners: Encourage more experimentation with different techniques and materials. Challenge them to explore more complex themes and emotions.



Shadow-Self Masks: Exploring Identity Through Art

Instructor: Melissa Rose Tylinski

Workshop Overview

Summary: In the workshop, we will explore art's potential as a tool of healing through personal expression, grounded in identity frameworks rooted in psychology and the creative processes of mask-making

Workshop Length: Approximately 1.5 hours

Materials Needed

- Full-sized paper mache mask: 1 per student
- Ribbons or strings: a few per student
- Paper patterns: various; assorted
- Feathers, beads, bells, decorative craft materials: various; assorted
- Pencil: 1
- Sheet of paper: 1

Shared/Instructor Materials:

- Old Books
- Acrylic Paints
- Paint Brushes
- Glue Sticks or Hot Glue
- Paper
- Writing tools

Prep Notes

No additional preparation needed.

Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

Pre-activity reflection: A short guided reflection focusing on feelings and emotions can help participants connect with their inner selves before starting the creative process.

Prep Notes

No additional preparation needed.

Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

Pre-activity reflection: A short guided reflection focusing on feelings and emotions can help participants connect with their inner selves before starting the creative process.

Guide the students through a series of reflection questions (questions can be adjusted for different grade levels):

- How does school, sports, peers and your family influence you?
 - What have you learned / gained through your experiences?
 - What is different in this stage of school/life than in other stages?
 - How are you handling new responsibilities?
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MAIN ACTIVITY

Iceberg Intro

Through the metaphor of an iceberg, what is seen/unseen, take this opportunity to talk about your emotions, identity, and culture, and reflect on where there might be risk or protection and a network of self-care.

1. Take a piece of paper and draw a large triangle in the middle of the page.
2. Draw a horizontal line through the middle of the triangle.
3. Above the line, write a list of things about you that people can see. It could be emotions, expression, personality, heritage, hobbies, something tied to your culture like fashion, identity, and any perceptions about you.
4. Below the line, write a list of things about you that people might not or cannot see. Again, this could be an emotion, something about your identity, fears, desires, and your culture that people may not assume, something you wish people knew about you, and more.

Planning your mask

Goal: Reflect on your identity and select meaningful symbols to represent it on your mask.

1. Refer to your Iceberg Intro Worksheet. Look at your completed identity iceberg. Think about both what is visible to others (tip of the iceberg) and what lies beneath the surface.
2. Choose Responses to Represent. Pick a few ideas from your iceberg that feel important to you—these can relate to your home, family, culture, mood, or values.
3. Assign Symbols, Colors, or Textures. For each response, choose a symbol, color, or texture using the materials provided. These will later be added to your mask.
4. Mood Color Reflection (Optional). Think about your general mood. If it were a color, what would it be? If this is difficult, you can use your favorite color instead.

Tip of the Iceberg – *Front of the Mask*

Goal: Create the visible part of your identity using color and symbols.

1. Paint the background. Using your chosen color(s), paint the front of your mask to express your external self.
2. Add symbols and details. Add textures, symbols, and patterns using paint, brushes, and other materials.
3. Use collage materials, like scrap paper, pages from old books, or found objects, to create additional symbols. Cut and paste these onto the front of the mask to represent parts of yourself that others can easily see or know about you.

Rest of the Iceberg - *Inside of the mask*

Goal: Express your inner identity—what lies below the surface.

1. Paint the inside. Choose a color that represents how you feel inside. Use this as the base color for the inside of your mask.
2. Add hidden symbols. Create textures, symbols, and patterns that reflect your private thoughts, emotions, beliefs, or cultural influences.
3. Use collage materials (continued). As with the front, use scrap paper, book pages, and found objects to build meaningful symbols. Paste them inside the mask.

Connecting the Mask - *Adding String or Ribbon*

Goal: Prepare the mask for wearing or displaying.

1. Make two holes. Use scissors or a hole punch to create two small holes near the eye area—halfway between the outer edge of each eye and the edge of the mask.
2. Attach string or ribbon. Cut two equal lengths of ribbon or string. Tie one end of each to the holes, making sure the loose ends are long enough to tie behind the head.

Discussion & Reflection

Discussion:

- Carl Jung defined the shadow self as the unconscious part of our personality that contains suppressed emotions, desires, and traits we reject or deny.
- Everyone has a shadow, and it often forms in childhood based on societal, cultural, and familial expectations.
- Ignoring the shadow can lead to projection—when we see our denied qualities in others and react negatively.
- Jungian art therapy suggests that creative expression helps us recognize and integrate our shadow in a healthy way.

Reflection Questions:

- “Have you ever felt like you had emotions or thoughts you couldn’t express? Maybe anger, jealousy, or insecurity?”

Explain that these feelings don’t make us bad—they are just parts of us that we haven’t learned to accept yet.

Additional information: Jungian psychology, from the teachings of Carl Jung, frames the integration of the shadow as a key to self-growth. Suppressing it can lead to mental distress, but acknowledging it helps develop self-acceptance and balance. The shadow is not something to be feared but understood. By facing it, we gain strength, self-awareness, and a deeper connection to who we truly are. In art therapy, shadow work is used to help people process emotions and find healing through creativity.

The instructor can close with general comments on how their environment has influenced them positively in relation to personal growth.

Closing Activity

The instructor encourages students to do a Gallery Walk to view other masks. When they sit back down, the instructor encourages dialogue on what they noticed and saw in others, and if there are any similarities to their own masks.

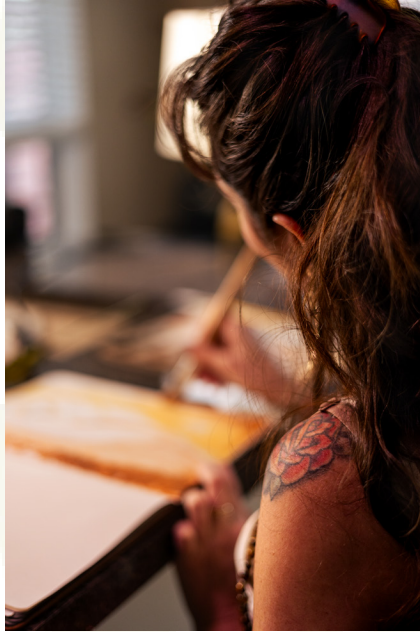
Extending the Lesson Beyond the Classroom

- Encourage students to journal about their experience; ie: what they saw in others, what ways can they bring their shadow selves forward, etc.
 - Encourage students to create other masks outside of the classroom to represent other aspects of themselves.
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Instructor Notes & Adaptations

The pre-activity reflection questions can be adjusted for different grade levels:

- School influence on identity for 6-7th grades: Self-reflection on how they are adjusting to middle school. What are new challenges faced with? What is different for them in middle school? How are they handling the new responsibilities?
- School influence on identity for 8th grade: Self-reflection on what they have learned about themselves since starting middle school. What has changed for the better? What new personal skills have been developed? What may change when entering high school?
- School influence on identity for 9-10th grades: Self-reflection on how they are adjusting to high school. What are new challenges faced with? What is different for them in high school? How are they handling the new responsibilities?
- School influence on identity for 11-12th grades: Self-reflection on what they have learned about themselves since starting high school. What has changed for the better? What new personal skills have been developed? New knowledge about their abilities?



The Blueprint of Our Lives: Mapping Our Past, Present, and Future Through Art

Instructor: Jatziri Barron

Workshop Overview

In this reflective workshop, students use art and writing to map their personal journey—past, present, and future—through a symbolic “life blueprint.” It guides participants to explore their values, dreams, fears, and aspirations. Using only shades of blue and simple materials, students create a visual timeline of their lives, combining introspective writing with abstract symbolism. The process encourages emotional awareness, goal-setting, and creative self-expression, helping each participant leave with a tangible, empowering reminder of who they are and where they’re going.

The workshop is not dependent on advanced artistic skills. The focus is on symbolism, self-expression, and personal reflection. Participants do not need to be skilled artists; rather, the emphasis is on using art as a tool for visualization and self-awareness.

Workshop Length: Approximately 1.5 - 2 hours

Materials Needed

- Blue color pencils: 3 different shades of blue
- 11x14in paper: 1 sheet
- Pencil: 1
- Extra blank pages for writing: 1-2
- Sharpener and eraser

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Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

Optional Reflection 1: A Sense of Exploration

Ask the student to reflect and write on a sheet of paper:

- A personal goal or aspiration they have for their future.
- One experience or challenge from their past that has impacted them.
- A core value that’s important to them (e.g., honesty, kindness, ambition).
- A role model: someone that is good at something they want to be good at, or someone that they admire. What is their best quality?

Optional Reflection 2: Dreams, Values, and Fears

The instructor may offer the following guided reflection to the students:

Values

Think about the things in life that matter most to you. These could be qualities or principles you value, things that shape your decisions, or things you would never want to compromise on. It might be things like kindness, family, honesty, hard work, freedom, or adventure. Your values are what drive you and help you make decisions. What are yours?

Write down 3-5 values that are most to you. They can be as broad or as specific as you'd like (ex. "compassion," "creativity," "independence").

What are the things you stand for, or would never want to live without? What makes you feel truly yourself?"

Dreams

Now, let's think about your future. What are your biggest dreams? Imagine there are no limits! What would your ideal life look like in 5, 10, or even 20 years? This could be anything from career goals, personal growth, relationships, or even how you want to feel every day.

Write down 2-3 dreams or goals you have for the future.

If anything were possible, what would you achieve or become? How would your life be different from today? Now let's think about what could be in between you and your dreams.

Fears

What are the things that scare you or hold you back from pursuing your dreams? Are there any fears that stop you from taking risks or following your heart?

These might be fears of failure, judgment from others, or even fears about your own abilities. It's okay to feel afraid, but understanding these fears can help you break through them.

Write down 2-3 fears or obstacles that you feel you'd like to overcome. They can be internal (like self-doubt) or external (like financial challenges or societal pressures).

Share one value, one dream, and one fear you wrote with the group or reflect on how your values might support your dreams, and how understanding your fears could help you overcome obstacles. If you feel your values might not support your dreams, what new values do you think would?

Write 1-2 small actions you can take today to face one of your fears. Think about ways to reframe your fears into motivation.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Part 1: The Power of Words “Who Are You?”

Optional Reflection 1: A Sense of Exploration

Firewriting Exercise-Guiding Questions for Writing (Self-Reflection & Identity)

Students will divide their paper into four sections and answer these questions:

- **Who am I? (Identity)**
 - What words describe me?
 - What do I love about myself?
 - What is something I’ve overcome?
- **Where am I? (Context)**
 - What are the things shaping my current life? (Family, school, emotions, challenges)
 - How do I feel at this moment?
- **Where do I want to go? (Aspirations)**
 - If there were no limits, what would I do or become?
 - What is one small action I can take to move toward this goal?
- **What actions define me? (The Power of Choice)**
 - What daily habits or choices bring me closer to my dream?
- **What choices hold me back?**
 - If I could change one thing today, what would it be?

Don’t overthink! Write honestly and freely.

Part 2: Turning Words into Art – “Draw Your Blueprint”

This part takes words and reflections and turns them into art—a visual representation of past, present, and future using only blue color pencils.

1. Have the student divide their paper into 3 sections: Past, Present, and Future
2. Have the student choose symbols, abstract designs, or textures to represent each phase of their journey.
3. Have the student write some of their words lightly on the paper, then draw over them—“just like life, our experiences shape us but don’t define us”.
4. Have the student experiment with different shades of blue to express emotions (darker for struggles, lighter for hope, etc.).

For references on symbolism, techniques, and other ideas, refer to the “Appendix” section.

Discussion & Reflection

Students engage in discussion and reflection about their creations and the themes explored.

Reflection Questions:

- What symbols did you use, and why?
 - How does your drawing represent your journey?
 - If you could change one part of your blueprint, what would it be?
 - What's one action you'll take this week to move toward your future?
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Closing Activity

Instructions

Gather the group in a circle or seated formation. Ask each student to take a quiet moment to look at their blueprint drawing and reflect on everything they expressed during the workshop—past challenges, current values, and future dreams.

Prompt:

“Think of one word that represents what you want to carry with you after today. It can be a value, a goal, a feeling, or a reminder. Something that helps guide you forward.”

Action:

Go around the group and have each student say their word aloud—just the word. No explanation needed, unless they'd like to share more.

Extending the Lesson Beyond the Classroom

Encourage students to take their artwork home and place it somewhere visible, and whenever they feel lost, overwhelmed, or stuck, look at their blueprint and reflect:

What choice can I make today that brings me closer to the person I want to become?

And remember:

Your thoughts shape your reality. Your past does not define you. The future is built by small, conscious actions every day. Don't be afraid to switch directions—what matters most is staying true to yourself. Don't follow someone else's blueprint; be authentic to who you are and the path that feels right for you.

Encourage students to try this exercise with shades of different colors for different emotions or aspects of their life.

Instructor Notes & Adaptations

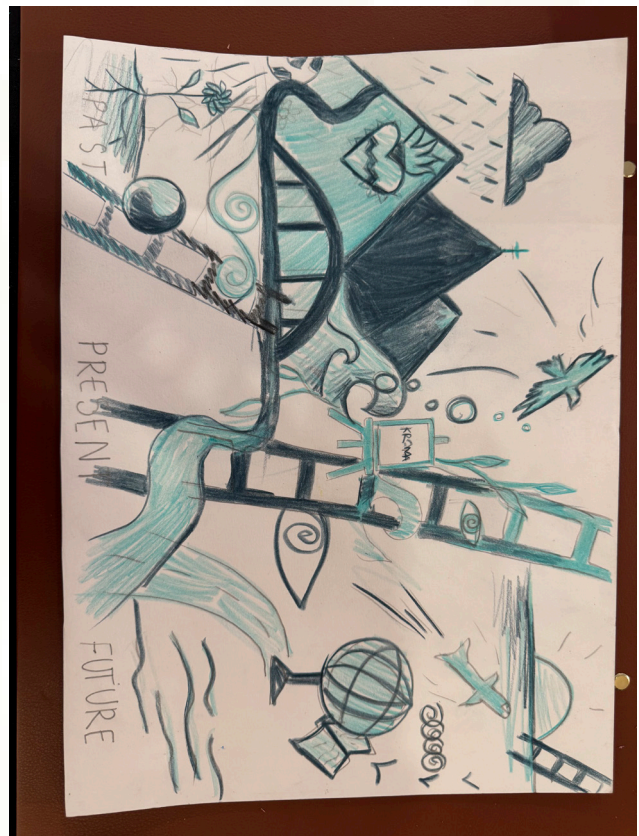
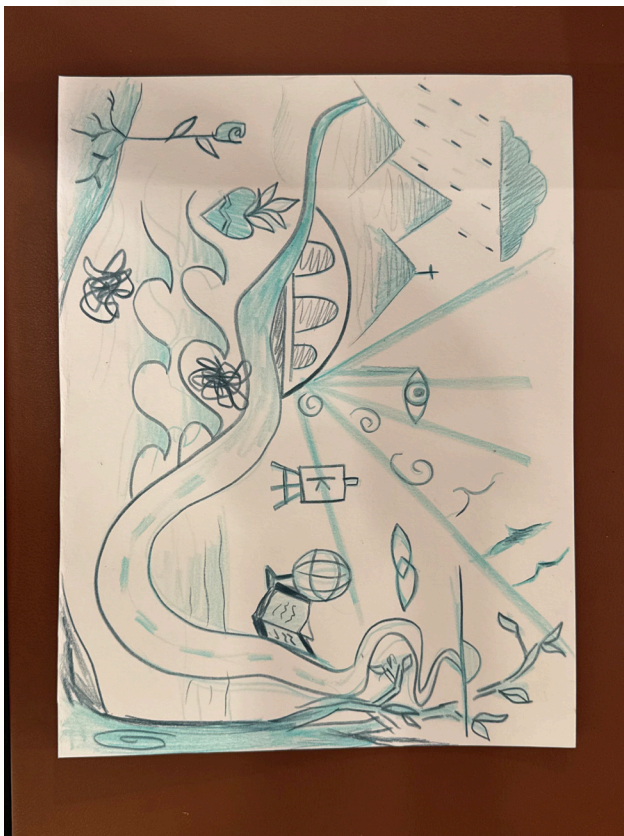
Physical Disabilities: If students have limited fine motor skills, provide adaptive tools like larger pencils or pens, weighted writing tools, or digital drawing tools. Students can also choose to create their blueprints digitally, allowing them to work with ease.

Hearing Impairments: For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, encourage discussions through written reflections or sign language, depending on the students' preferences.

Visual Impairments: For students who are blind or have low vision, ensure the use of 3D materials like raised symbols, clay, or fabric for creating the blueprint's components.

Inclusive Language and Values: Be mindful of the cultural differences in values, goals, and aspirations. Avoid imposing Western-centric ideas or concepts of success. Allow students to explore values that are relevant to their own lives and cultural backgrounds.

Encourage students to incorporate cultural symbols or references that are meaningful to them in their artwork. Some students may connect more deeply with certain symbols or metaphors from their culture, such as traditional patterns, mythological references, or meaningful objects that can symbolize their past, present, or future.



Make your mark! Discover your voice, story and strength

Instructor: Claudia I. Macias, MS Ed

Workshop Overview

Summary:

This activity is designed to help students embrace and affirm their identity, build confidence in their presence, and develop comfort and strength in using their voice. By the end of the activity, students will practice holding on to who they are, walking into any space with a sense of belonging, and confidently using their voice—even if it means reading from notes at first.

A concise description of the workshop, highlighting its main goal and what participants will create or experience.

Workshop Length: Approximately 1.5 hours

Materials Needed

- Sheet of paper: 1 sheet
- Heavy/Cardstock/poster board type of paper in 11x14 or 14x22: 1 sheet
- Pencil with eraser: 1
- Any type of wearable item that can be “upcycled:” hats, baseball cap, T-shirt, jeans, wallet, purse, canvas shoes, tennis/running shoes: 1 item

Shared/Instructor Materials:

- White copy paper: 1 ream
- Microphone and speaker (optional)
- Hand sanitizer
- Sharpie markers in all colors: primary and secondary colors, and black
- Printouts of the following (Links/Designs in the “Printouts” section at the end of the booklet:
 - Make Your Mark Booklet (also available through the link): https://www.canva.com/design/DAGj45oar_o/cHJxNbVzi0sFQLh_LFhtCw/edit?utm_content=DAGj45oar_o&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton
 - Emotions Wheel
 - Color Perception Chart

Prep Notes

Ask students that choose this session to bring an item they would like to use in this activity. Not new items—these are items that they are OK to make art with. Example: old canvas shoes, T-shirt, any type of hat, wallet, purses, jean jacket, or jeans.

Alternatively, instructors can prepare a selection of items for students to choose from.

Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

1. Welcome! Intro the objective of today's workshop. Soft music playing in the background as students enter. Have low lighting.
 - a. As participants enter have them create a nametent (folding a piece of paper into a triangular "tent") with the following into:
 - i. Write first name in bold print
 - ii. Display the feels wheel and ask students to select three and write on nametent
 - iii. Answer the question "What did you do or will do today for self care?"
 2. Grounding and Meditation with soft music for two minutes
 3. Around the room intros using the nametent
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MAIN ACTIVITY

Step-by-Step Breakdown:

Part II: The Who and What of you! Make your mark!

1. Pass out the Make Your Mark booklet
 - a. Introduce the message behind: "Never leave _____ at the door."
 - b. How do you feel today (enter the words)
 - c. Name Acrostic: power words...action words...feel words...
Using each letter, come up with a word or sentence that reflects you and who you are! Some guiding questions as you create it:
 - i. My friends/family often compliment me on...
 - ii. What I like about myself is....
 - iii. Somewhere I feel happy is...
 - iv. I mean a lot to.....
 - v. Hobbies
 - vi. Character traits
 - vii. Personality traits
 - viii. Think of your strengths
 - ix. Think of the things you want to work on
 - d. What are your favorite colors and why?
 - i. What colors call to you?
 - ii. What does that color mean to you?
 - iii. How does each color make you feel?

Part III: What's in YOUR name!

1. Name Acrostic Art

- a. Using your *Make Your Mark* booklet as reference, on your large poster/cardstock paper, print each letter of your name on the left side of the paper
- b. Use your notes from your booklet to add your power word, phrase, or sentence next to each letter
- c. Use your favorite colors to decorate it, write it out.

Some additional points to consider:

- Introduce and explain artistic techniques, concepts, or cultural relevance.
 - Encourage reflection and experimentation.
 - Encourage students to personalize their work with their own interpretations.
-

Closing Activity

Part IV: The Closing, The Grounding. The Presentations!

1. Practice power yoga poses: Warrior 1 & 2
 2. Make your mark! Look at your name acrostic and select a word/words/phrase that you would like to write or present your Name Acrostic
 3. Students present their final product as if being interviewed on a show. The instructor will set up mic and chairs as if on a show and interview the student to share their Name Acrostic. Students can share it in the form of a: poem, song, chant, show interview.
-

Discussion & Reflection

These are a few practices and thoughts to help build resilience and navigate the challenges that arise.

- *You belong in any room you walk into.*
- *Celebrate the wins! Be your own cheerleader!*
- *Be proud of who you are.*
- *Own your voice, share your voice.*
- *Your input matters.*
- *Hold on to who you are.*
- *Use warrior pose to ground.*
- *Find a trusted human to confide in .*
- *It's OK to NOT be OK.*
- *Find healthy ways to find peace and comfort after a challenge.*
- *Practice self care on the daily to be able to handle challenges.*

Extending the Lesson Beyond the Classroom

- Encourage students to journal about their experience.
 - Suggest additional creative prompts or exercises to try at home.
 - Provide inspiration for how this art form can be used in daily life or for self-expression.
-

Instructor Notes & Adaptations

A message from the instructor: *You are YOU-nique! Be YOU-nique! Never leave YOU at the door! Listen to your inner needs! Reach out to a trusted human when you are not feeling OK. AND...it's OK to NOT feel OK. Seek support and counseling to get you back on track!*

To extend the activity further, students can draw pictures or use magazines to create a name collage—cutting and pasting words or pictures that reflect the letter in each of their names.



Expressive Hand Puppet Workshop: Exploring Emotion Through Art

Instructor: Alenka Cardenas

Workshop Overview

Summary:

Students will create expressive hand puppets by sculpting and painting paper-based heads that represent a chosen emotion. Puppets will be mounted on black fabric gloves to become interactive tools for exploring mood and personality.

Workshop Length: Approximately 1.5 hours

Materials Needed

- Pre-made paper-and-tape puppet head base: 1 per student
- Black glove: 1 per student
- Scrap paper (for facial features)
- Masking tape
- Acrylic paint & brushes
- Water cup & paper towels
- Optional: fabric scraps, yarn, googly eyes, markers

Shared/Instructor Materials:

- Scissors
 - Glue
 - Table coverings (optional)
-

Prep Notes

- Create a paper-and-tape base head for each student (lightweight, roughly palm-sized, hollow or semi-solid)
 - Pre-cut some simple shapes (noses, brows, etc.) to help with quick starts
 - Organize materials into stations or kits for quick access
-

Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

- Welcome students and explain the concept: creating expressive puppets that reflect emotion.
- Show a few visual examples from art history and contemporary works that demonstrate how expression has been captured through faces, masks, or portraits (e.g., expressive masks from different cultures, portraits by artists like Van Gogh, Kahlo, or Basquiat).

Main Workshop Lesson

Introduction and Warm-Up Activity

- Welcome students and explain the concept: creating expressive puppets that reflect emotion.
 - Show a few visual examples from art history and contemporary works that demonstrate how expression has been captured through faces, masks, or portraits (e.g., expressive masks from different cultures, portraits by artists like Van Gogh, Kahlo, or Basquiat).
 - Facilitate a short discussion: “What do you notice in these faces? How do they make you feel?”
 - Transition to introspection: “What expressions or emotions do you relate to most today?”
 - Follow up with a warm-up prompt: “What does happiness look like in a face? What about frustration?”
 - Students sketch or describe a face showing an emotion on a post-it or index card.
-

MAIN ACTIVITY

Part 1: Sculpting the Face

1. Choose an emotion
2. Use scrap paper and masking tape to build facial features
3. Encourage exaggeration (big frown, lifted eyebrows, etc.)

Part 2: Painting & Decorating

1. Apply paint using color psychology (warm = energy, cool = calm)
2. Add optional features: yarn hair, fabric clothes, googly eyes

Part 3: Assembly

1. Carefully poke a hole in the base of the puppet head to insert the fingers of the glove for support
 2. Secure the head in place with glue, or simply use it as a topper if students prefer
 3. Ensure students can comfortably use their puppet and animate it with movement
-

Discussion & Reflection

- *Group shares puppets and talks about their chosen emotion*
- *Prompt: Introduce a shared scenario: “Your puppet is walking into a new class and doesn’t know anyone yet. How does it act? What would it say?”*
- *Students introduce their puppet and describe how it would react to the situation, then respond to guided questions:*
 - *What emotion did you choose and why?*
 - *How did you represent that emotion with shape, color, or features?*

- *Did the puppet turn out the way you expected?*
 - *What choices did you make to show intensity or subtlety of emotion?*
 - *If your puppet could speak, what would it say?*
 - *How did the process of making your puppet make you feel?*
 - *What kind of story might your puppet belong to?*
-

Closing Activity

Wrap up with an empowering final task. This could be:

- A group share-out of their creations.
 - A mindfulness exercise related to the art theme.
 - A short writing prompt: “What did you learn about yourself today?”
 - A mantra or phrase they take away from the experience.
 - Any other short closing activity that is relevant to the workshop
-

Extending the Lesson Beyond the Classroom

- *Encourage journaling or storytelling using the puppet*
 - *Teachers can prompt students to write skits or dialogue for their puppet*
 - *Students can practice using their puppets for social-emotional learning moments (e.g., “How would your puppet calm down after an argument?”)*
-

Instructor Notes & Adaptations

- For younger or less confident students, provide pre-cut facial features
- For advanced students, allow multiple emotions or dual-sided expressions
- Use soft foam or fabric for any students with fine motor challenges
- Can be adapted to themes like “What does calm feel like?” or “Design a puppet for your inner voice”



ABOUT THE ARTISTS/INSTRUCTORS

Barron, Jatziri

Workshop: The Blueprint of Our Lives: Mapping Our Past, Present, and Future Through Art

Jatziri Barron is a Mexican visual artist, muralist, and gallery owner who has lived and worked in Houston since 2013. Dedicated full-time to the arts, she advocates through her work for the beauty of cultural identity and diversity. Her goal is to create connections among people of all backgrounds by raising awareness of shared human experiences. She curates exhibitions at the intersection of art, dance, and music, and is committed to empowering women and underrepresented artists through her platform Jatziri Presents. She currently runs Kroma Art House in Winter Street Studios.

Workshop Connection

This workshop stems from Jatziri's personal experience using art as a tool for healing, self-awareness, and transformation. Inspired by a concept she encountered at a Tony Robbins conference—the idea of life as a blueprint—she created this activity to help participants visualize their values, choices, and dreams through symbolic and artistic reflection. As someone who began using art and poetry at 16 to process her own immigration journey, Jatziri believes deeply in the healing power of creative expression. Her workshop encourages students to design their life blueprints—anchored in who they are, and who they aspire to be.

Cardenas, Alenka

Workshop: Expressive Hand Puppet Workshop: Exploring Emotion Through Art

Alenka Cardenas is a Houston-based artist, educator, and environmental advocate with a background in sculpture, puppetry, and interactive art. She holds a Bachelor's in Biology and a Master's in Public Policy, and has facilitated community-based art workshops that explore culture, storytelling, and emotional growth. A former middle school teacher, Alenka designs lessons that are tactile, reflective, and emotionally engaging.

Workshop Connection

This workshop was born out of Alenka's love for tactile art forms and their ability to express what words often cannot. Puppetry, in particular, has long provided her with a space for transformation, humor, and emotional honesty. She aims to guide students through a calming, hands-on experience that is both expressive and introspective. By creating personalized hand puppets, students are invited to explore emotion through movement, color, and character—unlocking new forms of self-understanding through play and creation.

Harrison, Meredith

Workshop: Unleashing Self-Expression Through Watercolor and Ink

Meredith Harrison is an accomplished artist and instructor with 25 years of experience in fine arts education. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Advertising Art from Prairie View A&M University and is currently pursuing a Master of Fine Arts in Studio Art at Houston Christian University. Meredith's artistic practice focuses on creating plaster sculptures and utilizing recycled materials, reflecting her commitment to sustainability and innovation.

Workshop Connection

For Meredith, color has long been a source of grounding and calm—a means to process emotion and reconnect with herself. Over the years, she has turned to color as both a creative outlet and a form of self-care. Whether painting or sculpting, the act of blending pigments and watching forms emerge helps her feel centered and present. This workshop draws from that personal experience, inviting participants to explore color as a therapeutic tool—not just to create, but to feel, reflect, and release.

Macias, Claudia I.

Workshop: Make Your Mark! Discover Your Voice, Story and Strength

Claudia I. Macias is a mother, educator, show host, and artist with 28 years of experience in educational leadership. She integrates music, art, movement, and public speaking into every learning space she facilitates. Claudia's workshops are hands-on and empowering, encouraging participants to practice new skills and share their growth. She hosts Catching Up with Claudia, La Super Comadre, a bilingual podcast and radio show on Radio Crystal USA, which uplifts voices and stories from Spanish/Tex-Mex/Spanglish communities. Her work guides people of all ages to discover their voice and share it—whether through word, music, performance, or visual art.

Workshop Connection

This workshop is grounded in Claudia's personal journey of self-acceptance. There was a time she struggled with her appearance, her name, and her place in the world—when media didn't reflect faces like hers. But through healing, learning, and connection with artists and mentors, she began to embrace herself fully. This activity helps students do the same: to stand strong in their identity, to feel empowered in any space, and to use art as a medium of healing and belonging.

Ortega, Vanessa Perez

Workshop: Bead to Bloom

Vanessa Perez Ortega (b. 2000) is a Houston-native interdisciplinary artist and cultural documentation photographer, primarily focused on fine arts and editorial publication. Her practice, rooted in her experiences as a first-generation inner-city Mexican-American, blends photography in the post-documentary tradition with digital design and sculpture to preserve cultural memory. Employing an intuitive and dynamic approach, Vanessa collaborates with local arts organizations to authentically reflect, celebrate, and commemorate histories of resilience, innovation, and triumph.

Workshop Connection

This workshop is heavily inspired by Vanessa's body of work *Ideas Chicanas* (2024)—a garden of meticulously crafted metal wire flowers with glass bead petals, conceived during her mother's recovery from tibia surgery. Raised with the belief that "one rests the day they die," her mother's sense of self diminished while bedridden. To engage her mind, Vanessa invited her to bead—progressing from bracelets to sculptures. Inspired by the same metal that now allows her mother to stand and walk again, they began using delicate metal wire to craft blooming flowers. In blending traditional materials with modern techniques, this work stands as a testament to the Hispanic spirit and the values of family, resilience, and artistic innovation.

Tylinski, Melissa Rose

Workshop: Shadow-Self Masks: Exploring Identity Through Art

Melissa Rose Tylinski (she/ella) is a visual artist and arts administrator dedicated to bridging the arts and health sectors through creative exploration and narrative storytelling. With degrees in Psychology, Studio Art, and Philosophy, and a Master's in Arts Leadership, as well as an Arts in Health Certificate from the University of Houston, she has developed a deep-rooted passion for using the arts to foster social connection, inspiration, and healing. Her previous role as a registered behavioral therapist sparked her curiosity about using art as a tool for communication and expression, particularly for those on the autism spectrum. As Healing Arts Manager at The Health Museum in Houston, she leads educational programming at the intersection of arts and sciences.

Workshop Connection

This workshop is rooted in Melissa's exploration of identity and the unconscious self. She reflects on how our identities are shaped by our environment—social groups, media, health, education, and cultural access. While our conscious minds navigate the world, our unconscious minds store memories and help us make meaning—sometimes immediately, sometimes later in life. Through art-making and moments of play, we gain access to these stored experiences, revealing deeper understandings of the selves we project and the shadow selves we conceal. This workshop offers participants a creative pathway to engage with both the visible and hidden aspects of identity.

APPENDIX

Workshop: “Shadow-Self Masks: Exploring Identity Through Art” by Melissa Rose Tylinski

- Swan-Foster, Nora. Jungian Art Therapy: Images, Dreams, and Analytical Psychology. Routledge, 2017.
- American Art Therapy Association. Exploring Strengths through Masks: Art Therapy from a Positive Psychology Perspective. ArtTherapy.org, <https://arttherapy.org/exploring-strengths-masks-art-therapy-positive-psychology-perspective/>.

Workshop: “The Blueprint of Our Lives: Mapping Our Past, Present, and Future Through Art” by Jatziri Barron

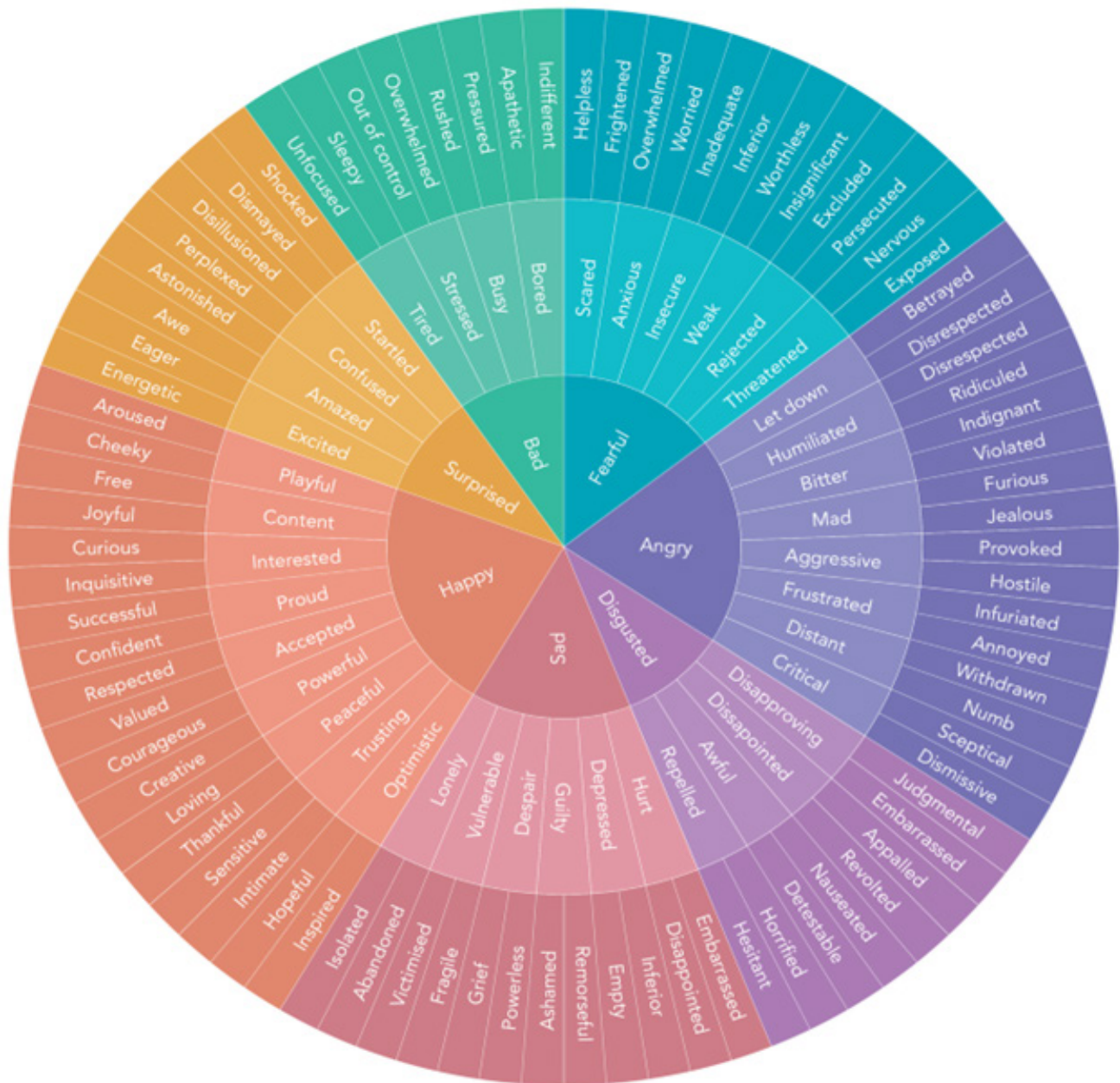
- **Concepts**
 - **What is a Blueprint?**
 - A blueprint is a detailed plan used by architects and engineers to design buildings before they are constructed. It serves as a guide, showing every detail of the structure before it comes to life. Just like architects use blueprints to create strong and lasting buildings, we can create a blueprint for our lives. Our choices, values, and actions shape who we are and where we are going.
 - **The Power of Values**
 - Values are the guiding principles that influence our decisions and actions. They are like the foundation of a building, strong values lead to a strong and stable life. Think about what is most important to you. Is it honesty, creativity, kindness, perseverance? Your values will shape the choices you make and the direction your life takes.
 - **The Blueprint Concept**
 - Everyone has a personal blueprint, an internal map of how life should be. This blueprint is shaped by experiences, beliefs, and expectations. Sometimes, when life does not match our blueprint (perception of where we should/want to be), we feel frustrated. But the key is realizing that we can adjust our blueprint by changing our thoughts, actions, and goals.
- **Symbolism Ideas**
 - The Past: Mountains (challenges) Waves (ups & downs), Bridges (connections), Rain (struggles)
 - The Present: Compass (direction), Ladders (growth), Circles (balance), Open Hands (opportunities)
 - The Future: Shooting Stars (dreams), Sunrise (new beginnings), Roads (journey), Keys (unlocking potential)
 - Lines & Paths (Journey) – A straight line for clarity, a spiral for growth, a broken line for overcoming struggles.
 - Waves (Emotions & Change) – Small waves for calm, big waves for obstacles, still water for reflection.
 - Shapes (Balance & Identity) – Circles for unity, triangles for direction, squares for stability.
 - Sky Elements (Possibility & Freedom) – Birds for aspiration, clouds for uncertainty, stars for guidance.
 - Time Symbols (Action & Growth) – Hourglass for time passing, a bridge for transition, stairs for progress.
- **Techniques to Explore with Blue Color:**
 - Layering – Draw over words to symbolize transformation.
 - Blurring & Blending – Showing transition between past, present, and future.
 - Contrast (Dark & Light Blue) – Contrast struggle vs. hope, fear vs. courage.

PRINTOUTS

Make Your Mark Booklet

<p>MAKE YOUR MARK!</p> <p>YOUR NAME HERE ↘</p> <p>Never leave _____ at the door!</p>	<p>HOW DO YOU FEEL TODAY?</p> <p>USE THE "FEELS' WHEEL & PICK 3</p> <p>1. _____</p> <p>2. _____</p> <p>3. _____</p>
<p>WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE COLORS?</p> <p>Write them down in this space and add:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Why are they your favorite?-How does each color make you feel?-What does the color represent?	<p>NAME ACROSTIC: ALL ABOUT YOU!</p> <p>WHAT MAKES YOU...YOU-nique?</p> <p>What is the story behind your first name?</p>

Emotions Wheel



The meaning of colors around the world

ers around the world

LATIN AMERICA
Canada,
danger