

## NATURE & ART

How to Assemble an Earth Mandala  
with Moriah Mylod-Daggett

*Going into nature reminds of us of who we are. We are nature, why not be part of it instead of apart from it? When we enter the woods, we are liberated by the sounds, smells, sights and tactiles we encounter. For example, have you ever gone into the forest and heard the trees talking? Maybe they aren't talking, but sometimes it feels like they are talking to one another, maybe to you-- like an Ent from Lord of the Rings. Ok, maybe you don't know Lord of the Rings.....that's ok! You will find your own associations connected to nature and that's what it is all about. Finding your voice with a little help from some of Nature's elements. I invite you to go on a nature trail or stroll in a park, pick up some items that strike your fancy. Is it a turquoise green branch with moss or a round smooth pebble? Doesn't matter....pick it up, smell it if you want to. Feel the textures, see the texture, taste the colors, experience the shapes.*

### **MATERIALS:**

Is this making sense to you yet? Ok, it doesn't have to. Just go outside and start picking stuff up that appears available to use. Let's see what happens with the materials we collected. How does that sound? There is no right way or wrong way, but if you need help getting started.....

### **SELECT LOCATION:**

Go search the grounds. Prepare a space once you found your objects. What feels like a good...perhaps a safe space to lay your object down?

### **ASSEMBLE YOUR EARTH MANDALA:**

Mandalas usually begin in the center and work their way out, but it doesn't have to begin that way. Some people begin on the outside and work their way inward. Perhaps you are a middle (wo)man and work somewhere in the middle? So you have your materials in hand, in a bag, down your pants or in your boot pockets. Start placing them down. Think of some patterns of how you would like to utilize the materials.

Perhaps you have an intention for making this specific mandala. Is it for peace, is it to honor loss, is it for self confidence, is it for clarity? What is it for? What do you need in your life right now? So by now you should have some foot work, perhaps some flower petals down, or some branches...it's starting to appear circular. Patterns are beginning to form. I like to put something special in the center; do you have something special or ordinary you want to protect? Hold it for a little while. What's healing for you? It takes a lot of work constructing these, lots of thanks and gratitude to the trees for allowing us to pluck their leaves off if we want to use them. I might quietly thank The Creator for my hands, my mind, my health, my happiness, my sadness, my pain-- to be able to make something beautiful out of something that wasn't there before. Did you know you can do that? Make something beautiful out of nothing?

### **NOTES:**

The initial nature of the mandala has a duality of the temporary and the infinity. So be aware that your nature mandala may change and shift as the weather elements and the environment impact your creation of the mandala. Initially you are giving back what you borrowed from Mother Earth for a piece of good and now it shall be returned. I suggest speaking a blessing over it silently or aloud. You may watch it change. Who knows who or what will encounter your mandala? Be in peace.