

# COLORING *SECRET SYMBOLS OF THE ROSIKRUCIANS*

In the early seventeenth century, as Rosicrucianism began to blossom in Europe, mystical texts and illustrations often of unknown origin frequently circulated in private among interested scholars. An unknown Rosicrucian assembled a collection of these texts and illustrations, and, in 1785, some of them were published in Germany, followed three years later by a second book, under the title *Gebeime Figuren der Rosenkreuzer, aus dem 16ten und 17ten Jahrhundert* (*Secret Symbols of the Rosicrucians of the 16th and 17th Centuries*).

In 1935, AMORC published a translation with the illustrations from the original in black and white. This is an invitation to readers to color the many illustrations in the books, linked to on the following page and posted on surrounding pages.

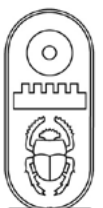
Coloring mandalas has gained attention in modern medicine for its potential mental health benefits. Research indicates that engaging in this structured, repetitive activity can significantly reduce anxiety, enhance mindfulness, and improve overall well-being.

A 2005 study by Nancy Curry and Tim Kasser in *Art Therapy* explored the impact of coloring mandalas on anxiety levels. In this study, 84 participants were subjected to an anxiety-inducing task and then assigned to do one of three activities: coloring a mandala, coloring a plaid design, or free-form coloring on a blank sheet. The results demonstrated that participants who colored mandalas or plaid designs experienced a significant reduction in anxiety, while those engaged in free-form coloring did not show comparable benefits.

Further supporting these findings, a 2012 study by Renée van der Venet and Susan Serice in *Art Therapy* replicated Curry and Kasser's research with 50 psychology students and graduates. Participants were assigned to color mandalas, plaid designs, or engage in free-form coloring. Consistent with previous results, those who colored mandalas reported a more substantial decrease in anxiety levels compared to the other groups. This replication underscores the potential of mandala coloring as an effective tool for anxiety reduction.

Beyond anxiety reduction, coloring mandalas has been associated with increased mindfulness and improved emotional well-being. A 2020 study in *Frontiers in Psychology* examined the effects of individual versus collaborative mandala drawing. The research found that while individual mandala drawing helped ease negative emotions, collaborative sessions significantly enhanced positive feelings and promoted a sense of well-being among participants. These findings suggest that mandala coloring can serve as a conduit for processing emotions and fostering a positive mental state.

Engaging in mandala coloring may also yield physiological benefits. According to Dr. Herbert Benson, a pioneer in mind-body medicine, repetitive activities that focus the mind—such as coloring mandalas—can elicit the relaxation response. This response is characterized by decreased heart rate, lower blood pressure, reduced cortisol levels, and



increased production of feel-good hormones. These physiological changes contribute to a state of relaxation and stress reduction, enhancing overall health.

Incorporating this practice into daily routines or therapeutic settings may serve as a valuable tool for individuals seeking to improve their mental health.

For inspiration with your coloring, you can find H. Spencer Lewis's coloring of illustrations on pages 36 and 37 of the [2011 "Hermetism" issue](#) of the *Rosicrucian Digest*, as well as in the "Mountain of the Adepts" article in the supplemental section of this issue of the *Digest*.

For more information about *Secret Symbols*, please read [an introduction to the text](#) written by staff of the *Digest*, as well as [a preface to the text](#) written by Lewis.

To access the full book for free, please visit the website: <https://www.rosicrucian.org/secret-symbols-of-the-rosicrucians>.



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**TABULA SMARAGDINA HERMETIS.**

