Autumn seems to have arrived! The change in seasons made me reflect that over the last few months we have shared the light of spring and the music of summer, and I ended up thinking about things we do for comfort and head space as the days get cooler and the evenings longer.

I kept coming back to the cycle of the seasons, the circular rhythm of day and night, the moon waxing and waning, and the seasons morphing and changing. There was recognition of harvest and hibernation, and from this came a sense of circles and spirals.

As a team we recently created a mandala for an event, it was made of natural materials – sticks, pinecones, and stones, and lit by candles in jars.

A mandala is essentially a repetitive pattern traditionally made of circles, created for meditation, art, healing or prayer. They can be very simple or immensely complex, but never fail to be beautiful in some way. In our mandala the candlelight in the night, and the contrast of white stones and light sticks against the dark grass was incredibly simple, but also striking (and for some, very moving).

Part of the specialness of a mandala is its temporary nature. They are designed not to be kept, but to be destroyed or removed – by hand or by nature. This is part of the absorption, the mindfulness, of creating it – that it is transient; just like the seasons, and just like our emotions, it will pass.

My invite to you this autumnal day is to allow yourself the time to play with circles. Give yourself some mindful space to lose yourself in creating a pattern. With no judgement of how it turns out, just focusing on the process of creating a repetitive pattern.

It maybe with sticks or stones, or with buttons or shells, or string and coins. Perhaps you wish to create a mandala using paper and pencil, maybe using patterns or shapes that come to you without thinking, or symbols that have special meaning. Just start in the middle and work your way out…

If you want a bit of guidance of how to draw or create a mandala there is document \*here\* that might help. But there is no right or wrong in this, so you could just go for it!

If that all feels a bit hard work, there are also plenty of ‘mindful colouring’ books (which I love for getting absorbed in) which include mandalas, and images you can print from the internet too.