

### 3-D Mandala Project: Mandala of Hope

Developed by staff at Project Hope, Roxbury, MA

The staff at Project Hope implemented a 3-D mandala project with the entire program. Staff decided to set up an on-going mandala activity on a table in a shared open space between classrooms. Students had already been introduced to mandalas via [YouTube videos](#) and in-class activities, so they were familiar with the concept. A large circle was outlined on a piece of cardboard with black beans held in place with a clear adhesive (Mod Podge). Several clear plastic cups of different colored beans (lentils, navy beans, split peas and others) were placed around the circle. Instructions (see below) were placed near the table. Students could sit at the table, work quietly, and add to the emerging design. Because



*Emerging Mandala of Hope*



*Hanging the finished mandala and letting the beans fall*

students who arrive more than 5 minutes late cannot enter the classroom, they need to wait around until their next class starts. The mandala table allowed for a restful and creative space for students to spend their time. The final design was held in place with Mod Podge, providing a clear varnish and strong adhesive. In this activity, the students wanted to preserve their Mandala of Hope and display it for others. To capture the Buddhist intention of non-attachment, they modified the letting go of the design. When they lifted

the finished mandala, any beans that were not fixed in place by the adhesive fell to the floor, which the students had covered with a gauzy blue fabric symbolic of water. These beans were discarded, and the mandala was placed on the wall.

For the mandala participation guidelines, see below.

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*Detail of finished mandala*

## **Take part in creating our Project Hope AES community Mandala of HOPE**

**Mandala means circle in Sanskrit. It represents wholeness, unity. “It is an integrated structure organized around a unifying center.”** Longchenpa

**Creating a group mandala is a unifying experience in which people can express themselves individually within a unified structure.**

### **Please follow these guidelines:**

**Select the beans you’d like to use. With brush, cover area with Mod Podge where you want to stick beans/grains. Place beans/grains on top of Mod Podge. Use as much mod podge as you need. It will dry clear.**

- Maintain *essential silence* while adding to the mandala**
- Remember to allow the piece to create itself through everyone’s contribution**
- There is no right or wrong direction, design, color, etc. all space will be filled in the end**
- Allow yourself to be moved by what you see in the color, texture, shapes and who you’re creating with while you sit at the table**
- Invite a friend to sit in silence with you and see how you communicate through this meditative process**