

## Why Zentangle®?

How many times have you heard people say 'I can't draw', 'I am not creative', 'I can't... I can't... I can't...' or maybe that is the way you think about yourself. Children start to feel this way very early, probably at about seven or eight, and very few regain their belief in themselves after this stage of childhood so it is not surprising that the majority of adults feel this way. Rick and Maria, the founders of the Zentangle process, set out to bring creativity and harmony back to people who had lost this part of themselves but in their journey they discovered a process which helped people with so much more.

Zentangle is an easy to learn process of meditative drawing which engages the individual in focusing on the drawing of patterns resulting in stress relief through mindfulness while at the same time empowering confidence and creativity. The founders of the process have shown those who have a go that; 'Anything is possible one stroke at a time'.

So what does the Zentangle method involve? To achieve their dream of empowering people through creativity Rick and Maria set out to get rid of the excuses that they heard which placed boulders in peoples way. They developed a 'List of Ten' excuses:

Time, money, ability, space, motivation, confidence, patience, tools, training and talent.

The basics of the process are that you tangle on a small tile, thus it does not take much time, space or tools. The pens, paper and pencil that you use are not expensive and very portable so you can tangle literally anywhere, in the hospital waiting room, while sitting next to a sick child, waiting anywhere, on planes, at the Laundromat, while your child is at dance lessons, at the beach, up a tree... just anywhere.

They sourced the best paper and pens adding value to the process through the quality of the tools. The surface of this small paper tile is lightly divided into separate spaces by 'strings' which are essentially light lines drawn to create connecting spaces and scaffold the drawing of patterns with the



fine archival quality pen. The patterns that we see everywhere are deconstructed into simple stroke-by-stroke 'stepouts' that guide the drawing of the patterns. Seemingly complicated patterns are then achievable by anyone and work together to create pieces of art. Confidence and motivation builds, stress is relieved and a belief in our creativity is renewed.

The challenge of training has been addressed by Rick and Maria through the training of teachers to go out into the community and offer classes to others so that the methods of more advanced tips and tricks can be available to everyone. CZT (Certified Zentangle Teacher) facilitators can enhance tangling through shading, colour, zendala, white on black, renaissance and more. You can start with Zentangle by accessing the thousands of resources on the Internet but the finer points, enhancement and extension of Zentangle is best developed alongside others. I find witnessing the joy that beginners experience as they realise they can produce original and beautiful pieces of art is one of the best things about being a CZT.

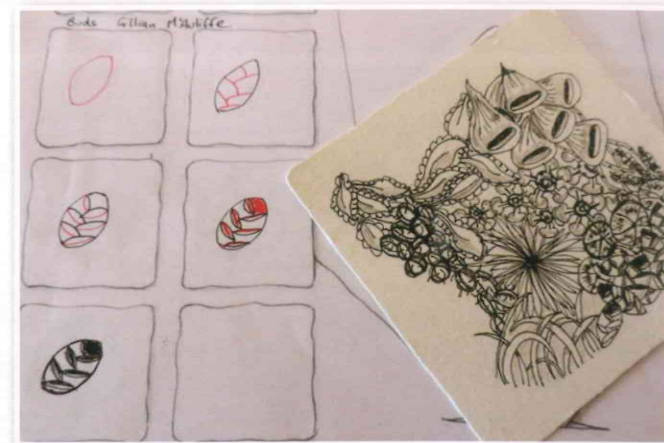
The Zen in Zentangle is how you feel during and after you create using the method. My experience is that the 'noise' in my head disappears and I find myself feeling relaxed and at peace. As one of my students reflected after a tangle class "I feel lighter". After a day at work a fifteen-minute tangle and I am ready to tackle anything, although mostly I just want to keep drawing.

The unexpected outcomes of the process are varied and include: the drill and practise involved in drawing the patterns which significantly enhance motor control and the patterning needed in handwriting; supporting students

who have difficulty with focus in the classroom; and the way the process transfers into other educational goals. There is also the joy of community experienced when you tangle with others which enriches your life. At Bold Park Community School we have engaged

### Workshop...

Join Gill  
for a Zentangle  
workshop @ Childspace  
Institute, Wellington on  
Tuesday 17 March 2015, 6.30-  
8pm. Cost \$40 per participant  
(includes introductory pack).



the benefits of Zentangle to support children from three to eighteen years of age. We have seen the many ways which Zentangle can support children in their journey.

Once confident with the basics of Zentangle, and having experienced success, the possibilities are endless. Zentangle Inspired Art (ZIA) is beautiful and satisfying. But I will warn you it is addictive so BEWARE, once addicted you may never be the same again.

More information [zentangle.com](http://zentangle.com) or contact [gillmac@pracwisdom.com](mailto:gillmac@pracwisdom.com).



**Gillian McAuliffe, CZT:** I have made it my mission in life to create and support children and families by making decisions which attempt to: 'aim at the best mark' and 'take the best means' for the good of not only the individual, but the community as a whole.

I am entering a new phase in my journey which includes Zentangles® as a tool to contribute to the development of the whole child, support everyone in the preservation of their creative confidence and enable the connection of people with themselves and others.