



Cancer Resource Centre

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SAND MANDALA HOLDS KEY TO SPIRITUAL HEALING

MUNSTER - Tiny grains of sand may hold the key to healing for cancer survivors at the Cancer Resource Centre in Munster. At a workshop on Wednesday, Sept. 15, participants took part in a sacred art of healing, by helping to construct a sand mandala painting.

“The sand mandala helps those who construct the images to focus their minds and holds their healing intentions,” said Claudia McFarlane, M.A., certified Mandala facilitator.

Millions of grains of sand are laid into place on a flat platform, beginning in the center and fanning out, explained McFarlane. Upon completion, to symbolize the impermanence of all that exists, the colored sands are swept back up to the center then poured into or near the water – where the water can carry the healing energies back into the universe.

First practiced by the Tibetan Lamas, today the sand mandala sacred art is combined with meditation and the process serves as a method for spiritual, emotional and physical healing.

“It’s a group process; improving the mind while producing a work of art through healing thought,” McFarlane said.

There are five steps to the “process” which include 1. Preparation (cleansing the room, including a blessing/prayer); 2. Holding the intention (purpose) in mind; 3. Construction; 4. Dismantling (using a spatula to wave or push the sand “intention” back to the center); and 5. Scattering (giving back to the center or “deity”).

Participants experience a sense of well-being and harmony as they take a journey into the “center” using colorful sand, McFarlane said.

(more)

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“I didn’t know what it was about,” said participant Erin Tacke about the sand mandala workshop, “I thought it might be interesting; anything to advance healing.”

“It’s been frustrating being a patient at times,” said participant Jackie Carr. “I want to be healed. I want to go on with my life.”

Perhaps it is no coincidence then that while Carr was creating the sand mandala, the intention she chose at random to think about and focus on was “perseverance.”

The Resource Centre is a program of the Community Cancer Research Foundation, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of cancer care available in Northwest Indiana and the South Chicago Suburbs. Since first opening its doors in 2003, The Cancer Resource Centre has offered all of its services free of charge to all who enter: including those receiving care from medical treatment facilities other than the hospitals of Community Healthcare System. The Centre is funded from donations and grants, in-kind donations and volunteer support.

Individuals may check out books, view videotapes and other educational material within the library or conduct internet searches to obtain research concerning diagnosis, treatment and general information. Groups gather to share experiences in social and professionally-led groups for support. Classes and programs, such as the Sand Mandala Workshop, are offered to help individuals connect in their experiences and to promote emotional well-being.

The Cancer Resource Centre is located at 926 Ridge Road in Munster. For more information on the mind-body-spirit programs and a complete listing of upcoming classes and events, visit our web site at www.cancerresourcecentre.com or call 219-836-3349.