Artfully Yours

November 21, 2011 By Cristina Gonzalez

Are you seeing red? Or is your lighthearted mood calling for glitter and feathers? Perhaps you're feeling square or all tied-up? Our emotions can sometimes be hard to convey through language. If you're feeling the need to express yourself but just can't find the words, grab a paintbrush—or a gluestick or a measuring cup—and articulate your emotions in a different way. Draw out your feelings in vivid details. Get lost (and rejuvenated) in a peaceful world of your own making. Creation can be liberating, unrestricted and unfettered. So go ahead. Give yourself permission to be an artist and create the healthy, happy life of your dreams.

Five Creative Outlets

- Explore yourself. Join together sheets of paper the length of your body. Then, have someone trace your outline. Next, using crayons, glue and craft materials indicate what's happening in your body. Is your brain fuzzy? Stuff it full of cotton. Your heart light? Mark it with glitter. Whatever you're feeling and wherever you're feeling it, pinpoint it on the body map.
- Raise yourself up. Create an inspiration board. Using a piece of paper or cardboard, some scissors, glue and a couple of magazines, cut out images and words that speak to you. Next, arrange them in an artful collage to guide and inspire your mind.
- Revisit your history. Find the sewing machine and then gather up scraps of fabric and old T-shirts. As you reminisce, stitch up a cozy commemorative quilt, follow a template for a funky dress or go freestyle. Turn the old but not forgotten into the new.
- Get in touch. Literally. In the middle of challenging circumstances, it's easy to lose your physical sense of self. Connect with a material that moves you—clay, stone, Silly Putty—and mold it in ways that feel good. The process can quiet the thoughts and worries taking root deep in your soul.
- Give to get. Set your oven to bake and bust out your sweetest ingredients. Be precise or work

without a recipe, tasting and mixing, chopping and blending. At the end of an hour (or four) you'll have cooked up a gift ready to serve someone else—or perfect as a treat for yourself.

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