

OE2132

MINDFUL HANDS

INSTRUCTOR

SHWETAL BHATT

FoDoME



I am a practicing designer, an artist, an educator and a mom. I am the founder and principal designer of an independent design studio, FoDoMe, which develops and markets copper and glass products, and is a creative lab for foraged natural materials. I am an educator and a documentarian.

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OVERVIEW

The pandemic stripped us of pretences and made us see the world with its naked truths. Our hands that cooked, cleaned, pressed keys and got washed many times are, unbeknownst to us, the mirrors and windows of our mind. We will explore this concept as a tool for universal mental health. This workshop will be an immersive experience of creating a product with one's hands while heightening sensitivity to one's emotional and practical needs and forming a deeper connection with nature and local skills. We will discover our relationship with nature, our home, society and ourselves through our hands.

OBJECTIVE

There are layers to the objective of this workshop. One is to find a pathway and a tool to our mental health, which literally sometimes lies in our hands - to veer away from an abstract thought of happiness and gravitate to the tangible sources of joy. As we get in touch with our own problems at a micro level and try to solve them in the truest way, we may develop insights into the macro problems afflicting the world. When we feel a convincing need and we work within our means, we may arrive at some understanding of what we need as humans, what fuels our creativity, what we are truly yearning for, and what are our failings. This would be the second objective. The third, and not so direct, objective is to connect with nature and discover it as the first and most powerful designer, draw inspiration from its intent and not just its formal attributes. In this workshop, nature will be a participant as well as a resource. Our hands, our insights into humanity and nature become guides in designing our future.

METHODOLOGY

This workshop is open to all disciplines. The workshop is very hands on with a game like quality to it. The following three methods of approach often running parallel. Conversations, Reflections, Introspection: to developing deeper understanding of our inner and outer world and its needs Exploration, Observation: of nature and materials and also our relationship with people in the local community who work with their hands. Inspiration, Creation of a work that develops with one's own hands and various other tacit learnings.

KEYWORDS

Hands, Playfulness, Making, Nature, Mental health

ONLINE
APRIL 5-16 2021
openelective.nid.edu