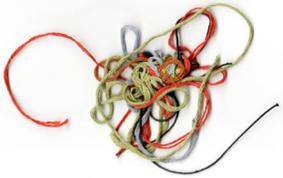


Life in a global pandemic + economic crisis + uprisings ignited by racial injustice can create feelings of tension and anxiety. It's a normal response to abnormal circumstances.



Sometimes it's a sensation of many threads tangled in a dense knot.

Other days it feels like loose threads fraying at the ends, or like fabric coming apart.

2. Sew a face mask with fabric and thread.

Materials:

- Two 10"x6" rectangles of cotton fabric
- Two 6" pieces of elastic, rubber bands, string, hair ties...
- Needle & Thread

Instructions:

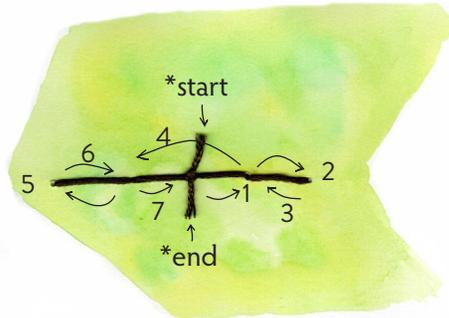
1. Stack the two rectangles with the outside fabric on the bottom.
2. Fold over the long sides ¼ inch and hem.
3. Then fold the short side over ½ inch stitch down to create a tunnel.
4. Run a 6-inch length elastic through the short side hem on each side of the mask. These will be the ear loops. Tie the ends tight. Don't have elastic? Use string with longer lengths to tie around your ears or head.



7. Go to the center of the circle and sit or lie down. Perhaps rock back and forth. Or hug your knees to your chest.

May you find safety and comfort inside your circle.

6. Wax thread with beeswax or candle.
7. Sew with a needle in the following pattern:



Journaling helps prioritize problems, fears, and concerns. You can track symptoms day-to-day to recognize triggers and control them. Journaling provides an opportunity to identify negative thoughts and behaviors and positive self-talk. (urmc.rochester.edu)

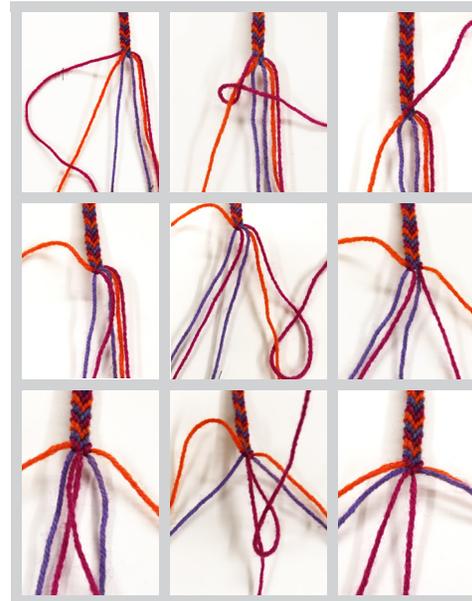
1. Mend clothes and shoes.

-Repair holes in jeans and clothes with visible mending, *Shashiko* in Japan.



-Take the shirt from the back of your closet that does not fit quite right and sew it to fit your body.

3. Make a friendship bracelet for someone you care about.



-Create macrame hanging plant holders for indoor plants to uplift during long days of lockdowns.

Gardening can reduce anxiety by providing food security in times of financial hardship and limited supplies of food.

Mycobacterium vaccae is a bacteria found in soil and may stimulate serotonin production, which makes us relaxed and happy. (gardeningknowhow.com)



Brain Areas That Benefit From Giving Social Support:

- Reduced stress-related activity in dorsal anterior cingulate cortex, right anterior insula, and right amygdala.
- Greater reward-related activity in left and right ventral striatum.
- Greater caregiving-related activity in septal area. (psychologytoday.com)

6. Use thread as a radius for a safe circle.

1. When feeling scared or overwhelmed, clear some space of solitude.
2. Find a piece of thread about the length of your body.
3. Rest a book or other heavy object like a water bottle on one end of the thread as a center point.
4. Extend the thread in any direction.
5. Grasping the end of the string, pace around in a circle.
6. Imagine this circle to be a fortress, bubble of immunity, or glowing ring of antibodies where nothing can hurt you.

In this book you will find thread-based projects that might help soothe tension during a pandemic. Some are practical. Some may help pass hours while in quarantine or while taking a break from trying to apply for a job. These are meant to be grounding routines to help when everything seems out of control.

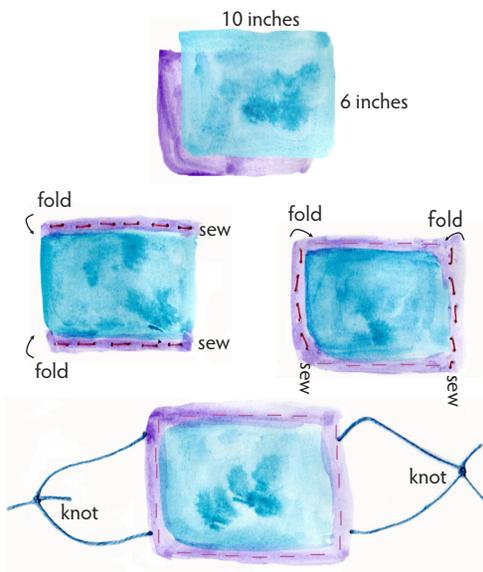
4. Make a Journal

Materials:

- 5-8 sheets of text-weight paper
- Cover Paper: cardstock weight
- Sewing thread: linen, cotton, or other strong fiber

Instructions:

1. Fold folios all in half into a section.
2. Cut cover paper to the height of the section. The width should be cut to the width of the section times 2 for flush edges or more for folded edges.
3. Lightly fold cover paper in half. Place around your section, and press down firmly with your hand.
4. Open section to the middle and punch 5 holes using an awl or sharp needle.
5. Cut thread to the height of the section times three.



Cotton face masks help protect ourselves and others by preventing the spread of COVID 19. The virus often leaves our mouths and noses in large droplets. Masks catch these droplets before infecting others.

Writing Prompts:

- In what ways do you feel bound up in your life, body, or mind?
- How can those things be released?
- Can you choose different threads to be woven into the fabric of your life?



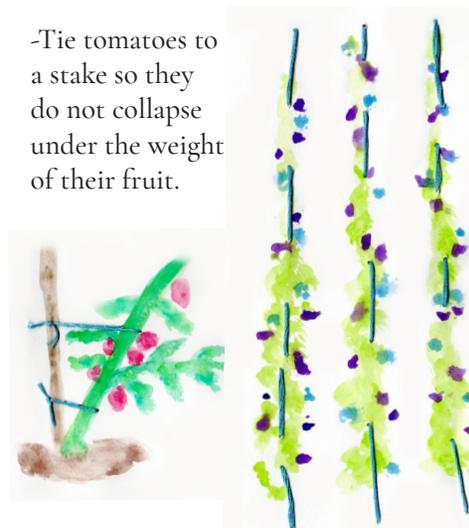
The Ties That Bind

Projects for soothing tension during a pandemic

by Laura Rowley • Illuminated Press • 2020

5. Use thread in the garden.

-Tie tomatoes to a stake so they do not collapse under the weight of their fruit.

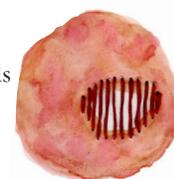


-Create trellises for climbing plants like peas, pole beans, vines, morning glories, squash, melons, cucumbers, nasturtium, and more.

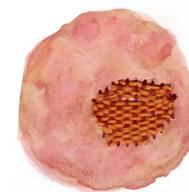
-Sole of your shoe falling off? Sew it back on for many more miles of walking.

-Darn holes in your socks:

1. Sew vertical threads across a hole.



2. Weave horizontal threads to make new fabric.



During a global pandemic, production & distribution chains may break down. Reduce your dependence on buying new things by keeping and repairing what you already have.