

# Art as Therapy

## Ebru, a traditional Turkish art form, reduces stress and boosts self-confidence.

Nihal Sönmez

Something happens at an unexpected moment and your whole life turns upside down. Yes, Covid-19 disrupted life for so many people this year. What I have learned is that I am grateful for waking up one more day, and I understand the value of every breath I take and every place I pass by in my car or on foot. More precisely, I realize

that what seemed small in my life is actually quite valuable.

Many problems came with this pandemic, and we need to get a break from the negative news sometimes. For me,

Ebru art (water mar-

bling) helps me feel better. Ebru is a traditional Turkish art. In Ebru, we create colorful patterns by sprinkling and brushing colors on a tray of water and then transforming this pattern to paper.

**When you focus on water and moving colors, you will feel less stress and anxiety, and you will lose track of time.**



Ebru art, Carnation.

Like other arts, Ebru is therapeutic. Water and the sound of water are relaxing. People use Ebru to help get rid of negative thoughts. People who have nervous or impatient attitudes could benefit from practicing this art.



Muhammed (left) and Allah. Ebru art, calligraphy, paper burning, and paper cutting.



Besmele (The Basmala), Ebru art and calligraphy.

When you practice Ebru art, you get to express your emotions. You feel less stress and gain motivation, creative power, and self-confidence. When you focus on water and moving colors, you will feel less stress and anxiety, and you will lose track of time. Ebru art improves concentration and helps you relax. Ebru art takes you out of your daily life, puts you in another world, and provides spiritual calm. Furthermore, you add beauty to the world by creating a work of art.

Whether you try Ebru art or some other form of art, you will find it protects your mental health and brings you happiness.

**AFTER YOU READ:** According to the author, how is Ebru art therapeutic? Do you find art to be therapeutic? If so, how?

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*Nihal Sönmez is an ESL student at the San Antonio Public Library and, although she recently moved to Houston, she continues to participate in classes virtually. Nihal studied Fine Arts, as well as Master of Art Education and Museum Education in her native country (Turkey), where she worked as a faculty member of the traditional Art Department at the University of Turkey.*



*Nihal Sönmez demonstrates Ebru art.*



*Ebru art, Double Tulips, represent Allah (God).*