

## The Folds of Wellbeing: Can Origami Help Mental Health?

A paper on a small table twists and creases. Each fold puts it a step closer to more than just a thin piece of wood, but a masterpiece. Swift fingers do the pleats, mountains and valleys. The petal folds and the square bases. The crimps and the squash folds. Once the model is finished, the owner of the fingers smiles. They are filled with a sense of completion and satisfaction. Some may argue that folding fold after fold increases stress rate, and trying hard folds do the same. That may be true for some people, but the satisfaction and skills made from completing these folds make up for that, maybe even completely trumps that fact. The stress also doesn't happen for most people. Origami improves mental wellness.

First, Origami improves focus. Russel, an author at OrigamiExpressions.com, a website speaking about origami, from tutorials, to the benefits of it, and to controversies surrounding it, believes that origami can improve your mental focus. In Russel's view, "Taking the time to perform each fold in an origami model carefully and precisely produces the best results in the end. The mind of the person folding the model will be 'in the moment' as they focus on each step in turn"(Russell) Because each fold requires precise movements of fingers, It helps mental health. In addition, after a complex fold, the folder is filled with a sense of relief, and when they finish the model, they feel a sense of accomplishment or satisfaction. Each completed fold adds to the sense of completion.

Next, Origami boosts brain functionality. OrigamiSpirit.com, a website much like OrigamiExpressions.com, has an author named Leyla Torres, a children's book author, found a study made in 2010 and has evidence from it that folding origami can help human brain function. She says, "It is an activity that provides both mental and physical stimulation, engages the mind, cultivates concentration, and develops fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination."(Torres) Since origami folding gives mental and physical activity, it stimulates the mind and origami folds improve precise movements. It requires full attention at most times. Some models even require folders to hold a flap in place to fold a different part of the fold, helping concentration skills.

Finally, Origami improves happiness. Introduce Quote (your words)- In 2024, CNN, a news source, published an article stating that making arts and crafts gives a sense of life satisfaction and overall joy. In the article, it says, "Participants' reported happiness, life satisfaction and sense of lives being worthwhile were positively correlated to participating in arts and crafts, but arts and crafts were not associated with decreased anxiety or loneliness which requires further investigation. Additional study is needed to examine the social aspects of creative activities, researchers said."(CNN) Reasoning/Explanation (As many sentences as you need) \*fill in as needed\* The people participating in this study say that arts and crafts are connected to happiness and a sense of satisfaction with their lives. They also reported a decreasing anxiety and loneliness. Origami is one such kind of craft, using creativity and providing satisfaction. The news article says that creative arts increase wellbeing and mental health just as much as having a good job. Origami fills the role perfectly.

In conclusion, Origami helps well-being and mental state. The folding helps motor skills and hand-eye coordination, it stimulates the mind and may even help overall happiness and life satisfaction. If people don't do origami, or any art, they are missing out on mental improvements and motor skills. In addition, those with no arts and crafts may experience unhappiness and a "what have I done with my life?" feeling.

#### Works Cited

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CNN, Making arts and crafts improves your mental health as much as having a job, scientists find.

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