

WORRY STONES

Worry stones or touch stones are also called palm stones, thumb stones, fidget stones, soothing stones, or sensory stones. They are usually oval, smooth, and polished to be rubbed by the thumb releasing anxiety and stress. They are used by holding the stone between the index finger and thumb and gently moving one's thumb back and forth across the stone while holding positive thoughts and intentions. It can be used as a psychologically healthy self-soothing exercise.

Worry stones can also be used in cognitive behaviour therapy as a physical 'relaxation script reminder' where the patient may notice an impulse to use the object, and thereby become aware of their own anxiety.

Worry stones are also great if you're a fidgeter, which is why a worry stone for ADHD is an effective coping mechanism. Keep them in your pocket when you have the urge to fidget.

FIDGET TOYS (INCLUDING THE BEADS OR TASSELS)

Fidget toys have properties that intrigue our sensory systems and provide proprioceptive sensory input and help us to stay calm and alert. They also help block out distractions, fight boredom, and increase productivity.

As adults we doodle, flip things in our hands, and we do this to keep our brain thinking better. The psychology behind the fidget toy is a means to give an individual's movements an outlet, which can help calm a person's nerves, relieve stress and serve as a distraction in an overstimulating environment.

Research shows that physical activity — even a little foot-tapping or gum chewing — increases levels of the neurotransmitters in the brain that control focus and attention.

INTERCEPTION

Interception is the eighth sensory system together with Sight (Vision), Hearing (Auditory), Smell (Olfactory), Taste (Gustatory), Touch (Tactile), Vestibular (Movement) and Proprioceptive (sensations from muscles and joints of body).

Interception is responsible for our understanding and feeling what is going on inside our bodies and is the complete process of your brain perceiving, interpreting, and analysing sensory data coming from inside your body, consciously or unconsciously.

Sensations such as hunger, thirst, bathroom needs, heart rate, breathing rate, temperature, and emotional regulation are all part of this system. It is through the mindful approaches such as mindful breathing, mindful colouring and heavy work which engages the neural networks involved in interception, executive function, and emotion regulation.

MINDFULNESS

Mindful colouring can be used as a form of mindfulness, which can improve focus and attention on your emotions and reduces anxiety and depression. This can be a helpful tool in managing unhelpful thoughts and feelings. Be mindful of judgements on yourself and your piece of art. Your colour choices and finished product should never be viewed as 'bad'. There is no right or wrong way to mindfully colour, it is about self-expression. To help get you started, we suggest writing down the following mindful colouring prompts, and keeping them close by to refer back to when you feel your mind straying from the present.

- “In this moment, I am colouring in.”
- “It does not need to be perfect, it is my self-expression.”
- “I am choosing [colour] to use on all the [shapes] in the picture.”
- “I am stepping away from technology, and feeling the sensations of this tactile activity.”
- “I notice that the [colour] shades make me feel [emotion].”

CRAFT CLAY- SENSORY PLAY

The importance of sensory or 'messy play' supports our interoceptive awareness through the development of a person's perception of their visceral signals. Visceral signals can be considered as stimuli that influence spontaneous brain dynamics. Messy play has an important role in the pathophysiology of anxiety disorders. Peripheral signals interact centrally to influence how we think and feel, generating our sense of the internal condition of the body. The relationship between emotional processing, anxiety, and interoceptive awareness remains a developing area of research. Tactile activities include

- Wilbarger protocol for sensory defensiveness. Provides deep pressure to the skin on the arms, back, and legs through the use of the special surgical brush.
- Brushing – Brushing on body parts like hand or legs with crayons or chalk and then erasing with various textures.
- Tactile box – which may include cornmeal, oatmeal, water, sand, different types of textured items, etc.

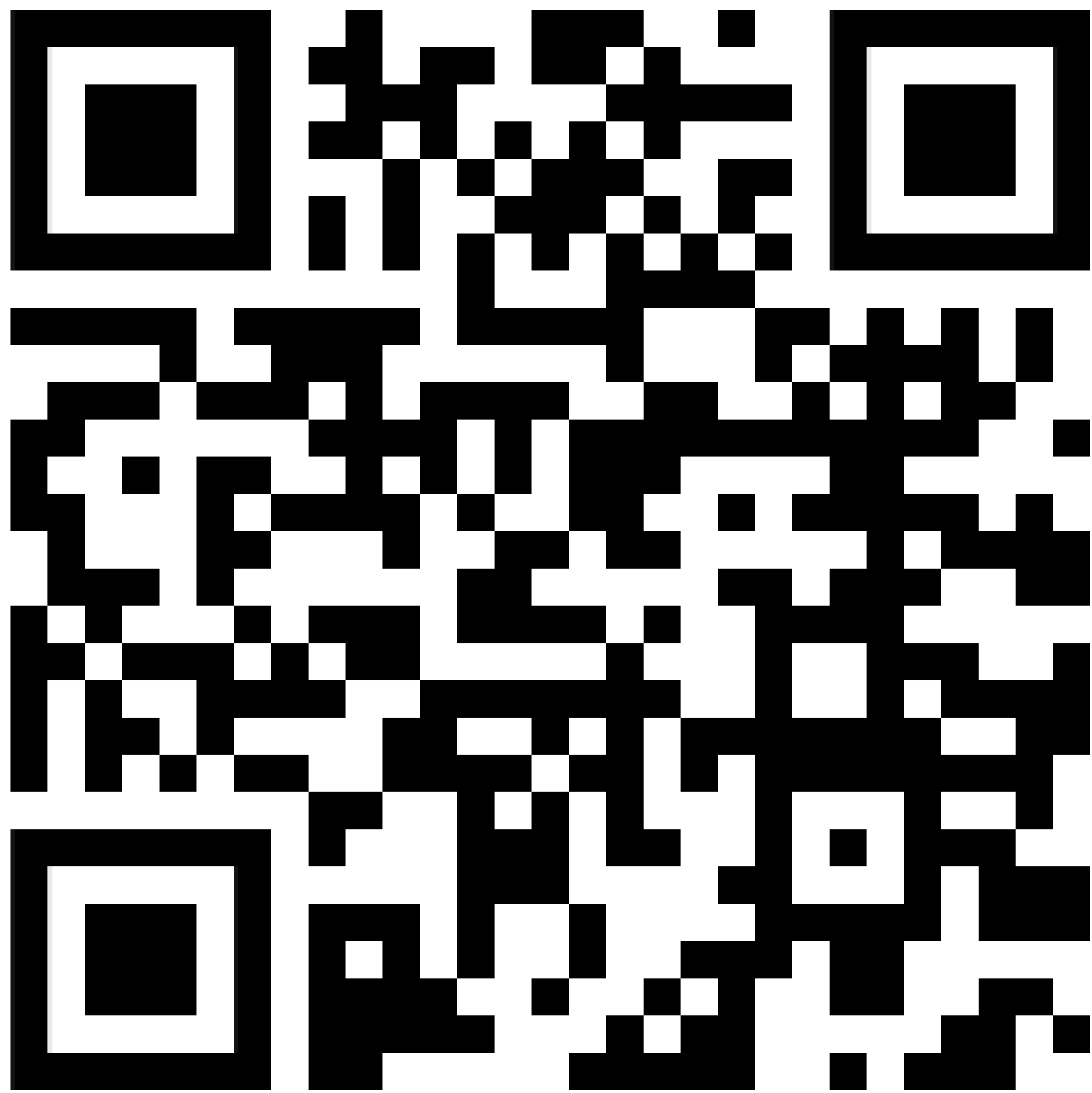
ORIGAMI ACTIVITIES

Origami is being called the alternative to mindful drawing. Taking the time to perform each fold in an origami model carefully and precisely produces the best results and the person folding the model will be 'in the moment' as they focus on each step-in turn.

Here are some things to think about that will help you be more mindful in origami:

1. Focus on the step you're doing. Sometimes it's just as much fun to just fold each step and let the model emerge as you go along. As you fold each step, be aware of the paper: the way it feels to the touch, the rustling sound it makes when you fold it. Notice how the paper behaves when you fold it. Does it hold a crease well?
2. Don't judge. You will get a better finished model from folding accurately and it doesn't have to be perfect.
3. Slow Down Don't be tempted to rush the folding – you are unlikely to be happy with the result. Make a conscious decision to slow down, be methodical, and fold every step at the same pace.

ORIGAMI SHARK



ORIGAMI RABBIT



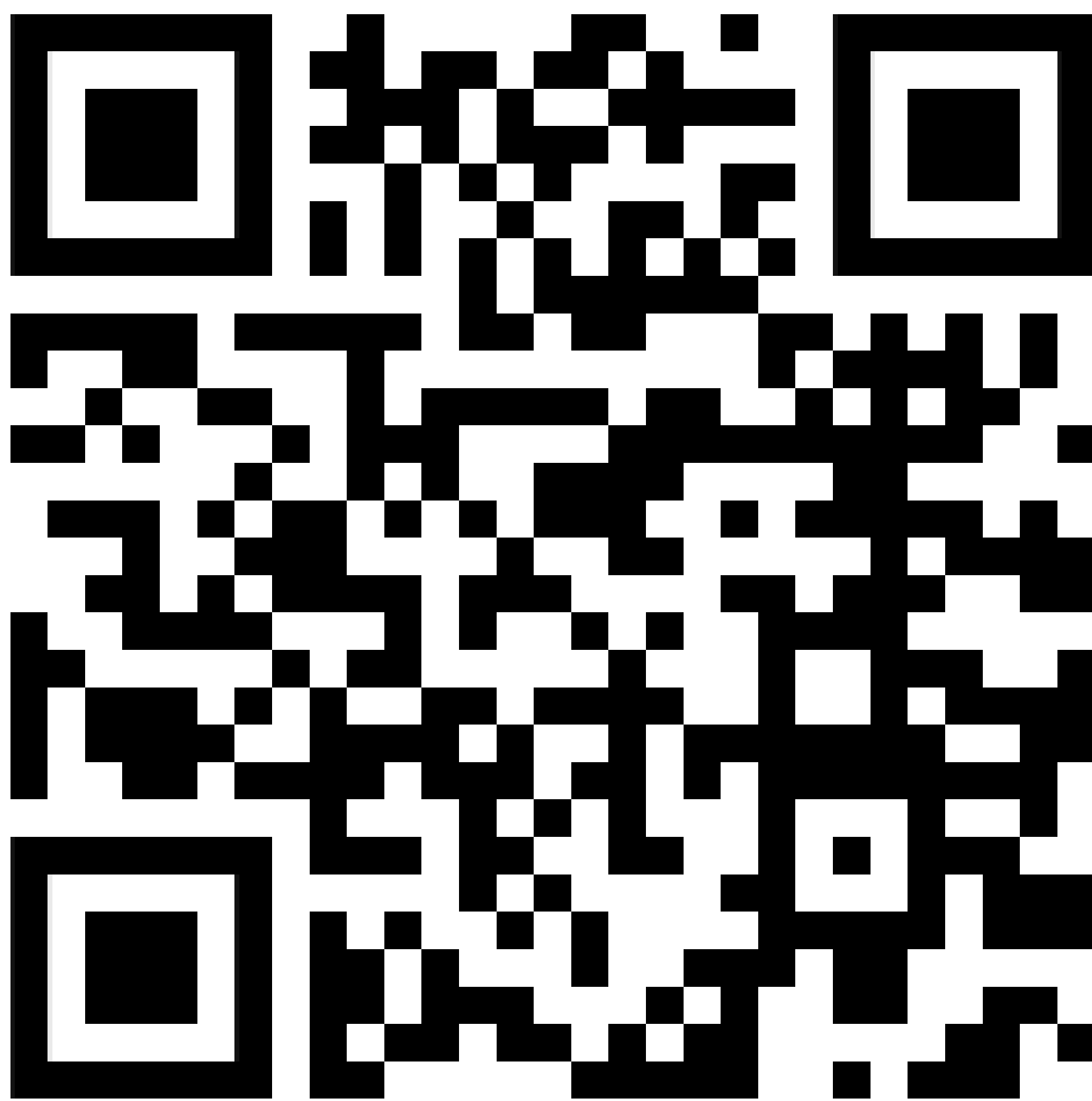
ORIGAMI DINOSAUR



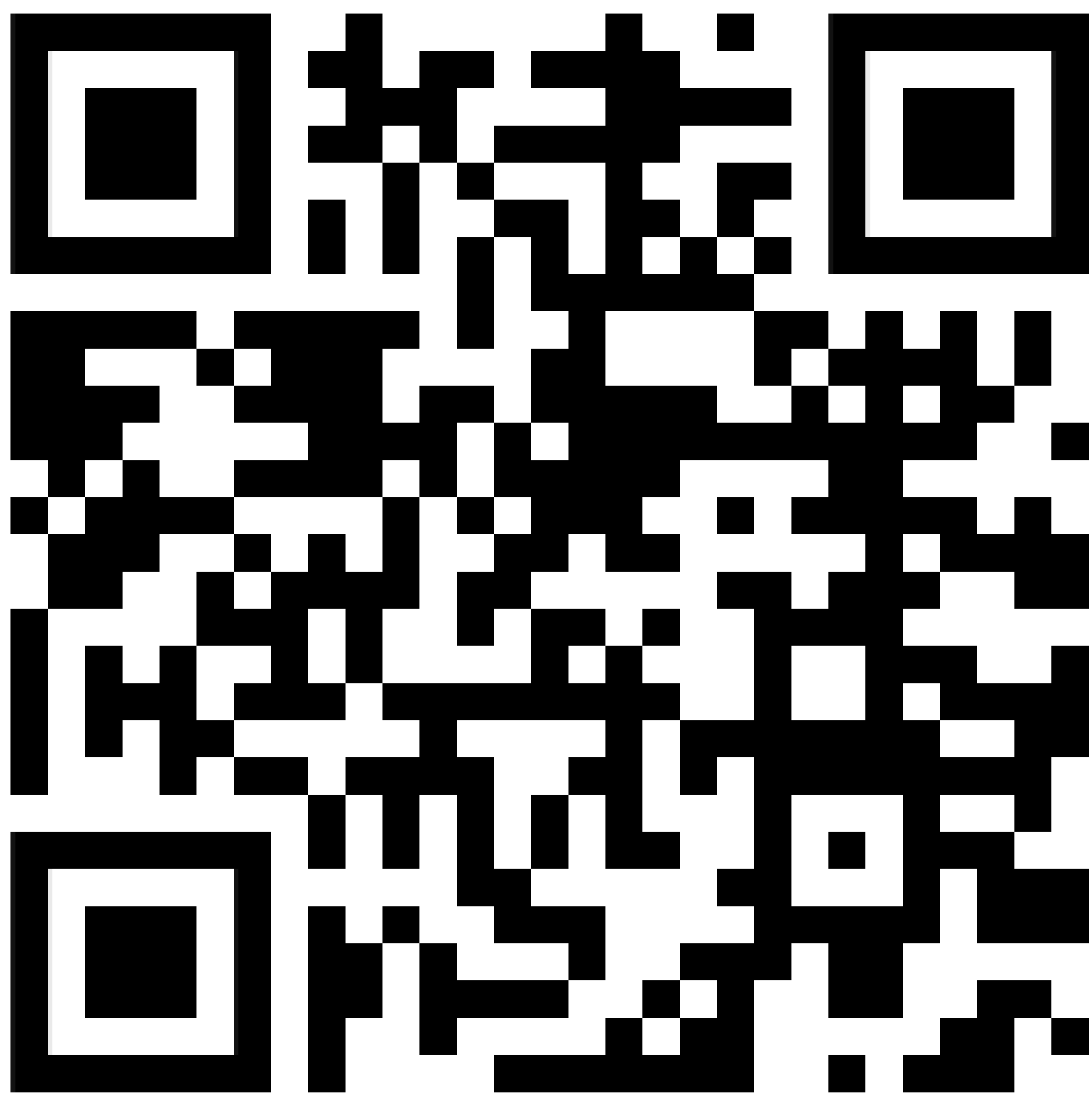
ORIGAMI HEART



ORIGAMI BUTTERFLY



ORIGAMI KALEIDOSCOPE



ORIGAMI KITTY RING



SENSORY BEADS

Feel free to make yourself a beaded keychain or bracelet for keys!

There are lots of us who are happy to help! One tip is to double the thread for stability :)

To make sure there are enough beads for everyone at the conference we would ask you to limit your beads to 15.

PAINTED ROCKS

Enjoy painting a worry rock or a rock for pure pleasure!

Please return the pens to this table for others to use, and if you are 'creating' on your table here, use a piece of brown paper underneath your rocks to save the tablecloths!

CRAFT CLAY

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