

# **Singing Mindfulness! Tips and Tools for Educators**

## **Overview: The Power of Song and Singing in Group Mindfulness Practice**

- Song is your body vibrating. It's a present moment, embodied experience, involving breath, vibration, and sound. It is embodied practice.
- Creates group cohesion, everyone breathing, sounding together; inclusive.
- Tends to stop talking and distraction- pulls group into focus
- Can provide a touchstone- a short song or chant that is repeated at every session (at opening, and/or closing)
- Sticks to memory- excellent way to teach and retain
- Helpful to kids who learn differently, have lots of trouble sitting quietly, breathing, in silence- different modality, more kinesthetic, esp when movement is included. Students often spontaneously make up movements to songs.
- Can help with inclusion of children from different backgrounds. If using a tune familiar to them from other areas of their lives (This Little Light), or in a musical style that sounds like their culture (Woke up this Morning, Heart To Heart)

## Gathering and Focusing The Group Through Song

**1) Call and Response** rhythmic patterns with drum or hands, students echo back, can invite individual students to lead once warmed up.

### **2) Using Short Simple Songs/ Chants from Simple Familiar Tunes**

*Bring Your Voice Into The Circle* (zipper) (*Bring your heart, mind, body*)

*Mindfulness is in my heart* (*call and response*)

*Woke Up This Morning* –African American tradition; zipper; reinforces concept of concentration, intention, focusing mind)

*This Little Light* (African American tradition, familiar, zipper

“This little heart of mine, I’m gonna let it shine..

This little voice of mine I’m gonna let it sing”

*Oh When The Saints* (i.e. Oh when my mind is calm and still..When my heart fills up with joy (or peace)

*If You’re Happy and You Know It* (“Take a breath!)

*This Land is Your Land*

*Feliz Navidad*

*We Shall Overcome*

*Old MacDonald*

*Are You Sleeping*

*Row Row Row Your Boat*

*Wheels on the Bus*

*Kum By Ya*

*Twinkle Twinkle*

*Let It Be*

### **3) Embodied Sound and Vibration**

(N.B. teach students a cut off signal for ending the sound)

*“Is your voice here today? Let’s check”*

Two fingertips lightly on throat, sound gently on “eh”, feel slight tingling under fingers. This is vocal cords vibrating from the breath rushing past them.

Ways to feel vibrations:

- Humming , lips gently closed, hhhmmmmm on long tone
  - ”Siren”, on hmmm or oooooh, starting low, traveling up to high and down, feel vibrations inside move up from chest to head. Notice internal tingling or energy (When toning very low –think of “like whale, or cow”-may feel a little tingling in chest..)
  - Feel vibrations by long hum on tone, opening into “ah” (so vibrations rush out into bigger sound) then close to hum again and feel the vibrations “trapped” behind lips.
  - Can end this by sitting quietly for a mindful moment and noticing what their body—and heart- feels like after sounding in this way. More alive? More awake? Calm? Energized?
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### **Resources For Music and Mindfulness**

•Handouts and mp3’s from this workshop:

[http://betsyrosemusic.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=198](http://betsyrosemusic.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=198).

•Information about Betsy’s musical classroom and educator programs, and ordering CD’s.

<http://www.betsyrosemusic.org/>

<http://www.betsyrosemusic.org/programs/for-educators/188>

•Lyrics for Calm Down Boogie songs [www.betsyrosemusic.org/music/lyrics/calm-down-boogie](http://www.betsyrosemusic.org/music/lyrics/calm-down-boogie)

•Video of Mindful Music in two Bay Area schools- includes interviews with children, teachers, principals.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CV1Hiq3ihl8>

•Podcasts of Mindful Music and teachings with Betsy Rose and other Mindfulness presenters.

[http://www.winterfeastforthesoul.com/index2.php?dest=2012\\_winter\\_feast\\_meditations](http://www.winterfeastforthesoul.com/index2.php?dest=2012_winter_feast_meditations)

## Connecting *Calm Down Boogie* Songs to Mindful Schools Curriculum Lessons

**Awareness of Breath:** Breathing in, Breathing out; Calm Down Boogie; I Am Breathing; Take a Breath; Clear Blue Sky

**Heartfulness:** May You Be Happy, Heart To Heart, Metta (Lovingkindness) Rap; Love Makes a Family

**Playground Kindness:** Metta (Lovingkindness) Rap; Planting a Seed of Peace; Ladybug Song

**Mindful Eating:** Chorus of "Taste and See" (can download mp3 from CD Baby or itunes); I Am Breathing

**Gratitude:** Thanks Be

**Noticing Thoughts/Labeling:** Clear Blue Sky; Take a Breath, Calm Down Boogie

**Feelings, Emotional Balance:** Equanimity; Clear Blue Sky; I Am Breathing; Calm Down Boogie; Take a Breath

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