

MINDFUL MUSICIANS

APRIL 2025 — ISSUE 3



Welcome

Discover the harmony of music and social-emotional learning. Explore insightful resources, creative tips, and inspiring tools to nurture growth and connection on every page.

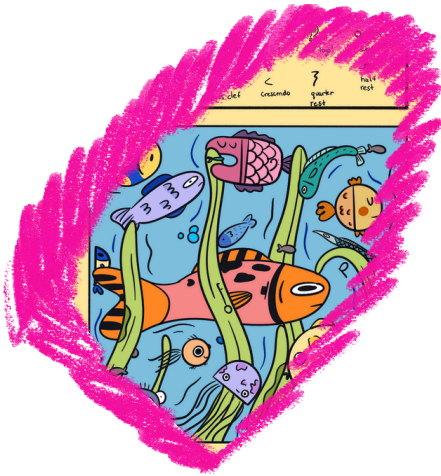
"All content in this digital magazine is owned by Mindful Musicians. We kindly ask that you do not share or distribute it beyond your immediate family or students you work with directly. By encouraging others to subscribe themselves, you're supporting our mission and helping us continue to create meaningful content.

Please remember that sharing or distributing this content without permission impacts the ability of Mindful Musicians to produce future resources. Your support ensures we can continue to provide valuable tools for families and educators. Thank you for respecting these guidelines and helping us grow!"

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2.

HELLO FROM CALLIE



4.

SEEK & FIND

Print in color or black and white. Either way you have a fun activity to learn music symbols, engage curious minds, and work on their concentration!

6.

Ruby FitzGerald

THE MINDS BEHIND MINDFUL MUSICIANS



8.

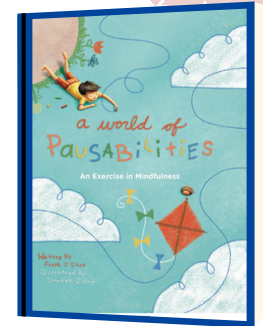
BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

- *A World of Pausabilities*
- *How Do Dinosaurs Say I'm Mad?*

10.

POCKET PAUSE

Printable activity for kids to take with them. A coping skill activity book filled with fun games and relaxation techniques. Just print, take some crayons, and you're set!



13.

ASK CALLIE

15.

UNLOCKING THE LYRICS

Square

17.

CRAFT

Practice regulating with the cutest craft around—
Square Bear!

21.

LUMI THE LIGHTBULB

Monthly Inspirational Poster





HELLO, FROM CALLIE

Dreams are powerful...and they are free. They have innate beauty because they allow wonder to play and hope to breed. We are encouraged as children to 'dream big' and 'shoot for the moon'. We constantly hear shouts of 'be yourself' and 'there's nothing you can't do!'

And then it seems, as we age; day by day, bill by bill, challenge by challenge, these phrases are stripped from our thinking one by one. Hope and wonder start to feel like figments of our imagination. We begin to feel insecurity and allow fear to drive our car while love so often sleeps in the passenger's seat.

I refuse to believe that hope and wonder are imaginary. Though there are moments and seasons where love admittedly takes a break and lets fear have a turn at the wheel, the main driver has to hold close to the positive phrases that were instilled in our childhood. I insist on this for the sake of my own soulful journey, but also for the journeys of the children that we are shaping. Hear me out...

"Weakness" and "Strength" have been inappropriately assigned and understood in our culture. On one hand, we say that struggles, mistakes, and suffering are all part of the journey for making us 'stronger'. Yet, at the exact same time, we are scared to admit when we are wounded. We are uncomfortable to show emotions in certain settings.

We push away opportunities of vulnerability as if it's on wheels going down a hill.

The irony here is that real growth; soul growth, only happens through vulnerability. Vulnerability requires one thing: bravery. It is brave to choose to soften to relationships, especially through disagreements. It is brave to find yourself caught in a moment of uncharted territory in life and to say "I need help". It is brave to try again, in whatever the circumstance might be. Perhaps it's riding a bike after falling off. Perhaps it's auditioning after being rejected. Perhaps it's engaging in romance after heartbreak. Perhaps it's trying to get pregnant after miscarriage. Perhaps it's choosing to be open-minded to a discussion you were previously closed off to. Perhaps it's getting out of bed in the morning and digging deep to choose your mindset when it's particularly dark in there.

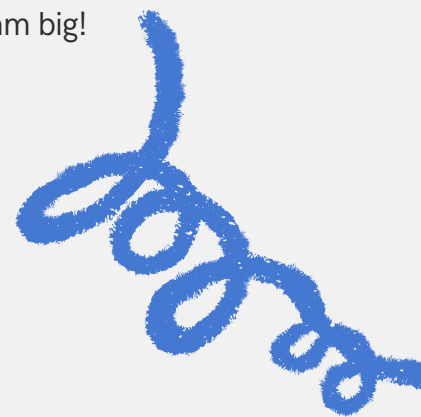
My belief is that though these growth moments are the most challenging, they are also the most rewarding. These are the ones that give us confidence in ourselves and help us to feel pride in who we have been, who we are, and who we are becoming.

So, back to the dream we go: I dream of all children understanding that to be brave is to soften. To be brave is to talk about their feelings, give others a chance, and practice grace with themselves. Bravery is embracing uncomfortable emotions and our job, as caregivers, is to accept and support rather than teaching them to fight their feelings.

I know that for me as a parent, this means modeling and I've still got a lot of my own work to do. But as I do it, I talk to my child (if/when age appropriate) about how I am struggling in hopes that when she is someday in the midst of her own challenges, she remembers that it is normal and that it is also okay to try new and different ways to move through our journey.

Imagine a world where the messages of Mindful Musicians are innately learned just as you and I know "Row Row Row Your Boat". For me, this is the 'shoot for the stars' idea. I thank you from the bottom of my dreaming heart that you understand the impact this content can have! I ask you to continue helping me reach this dream by spreading the word of Mindful Musicians and how we hope to change the world. Dream big!

Callie Fitzgerald



Seek



Find



black
heart



yellow
heart



our logo!



key

p

piano



bass clef



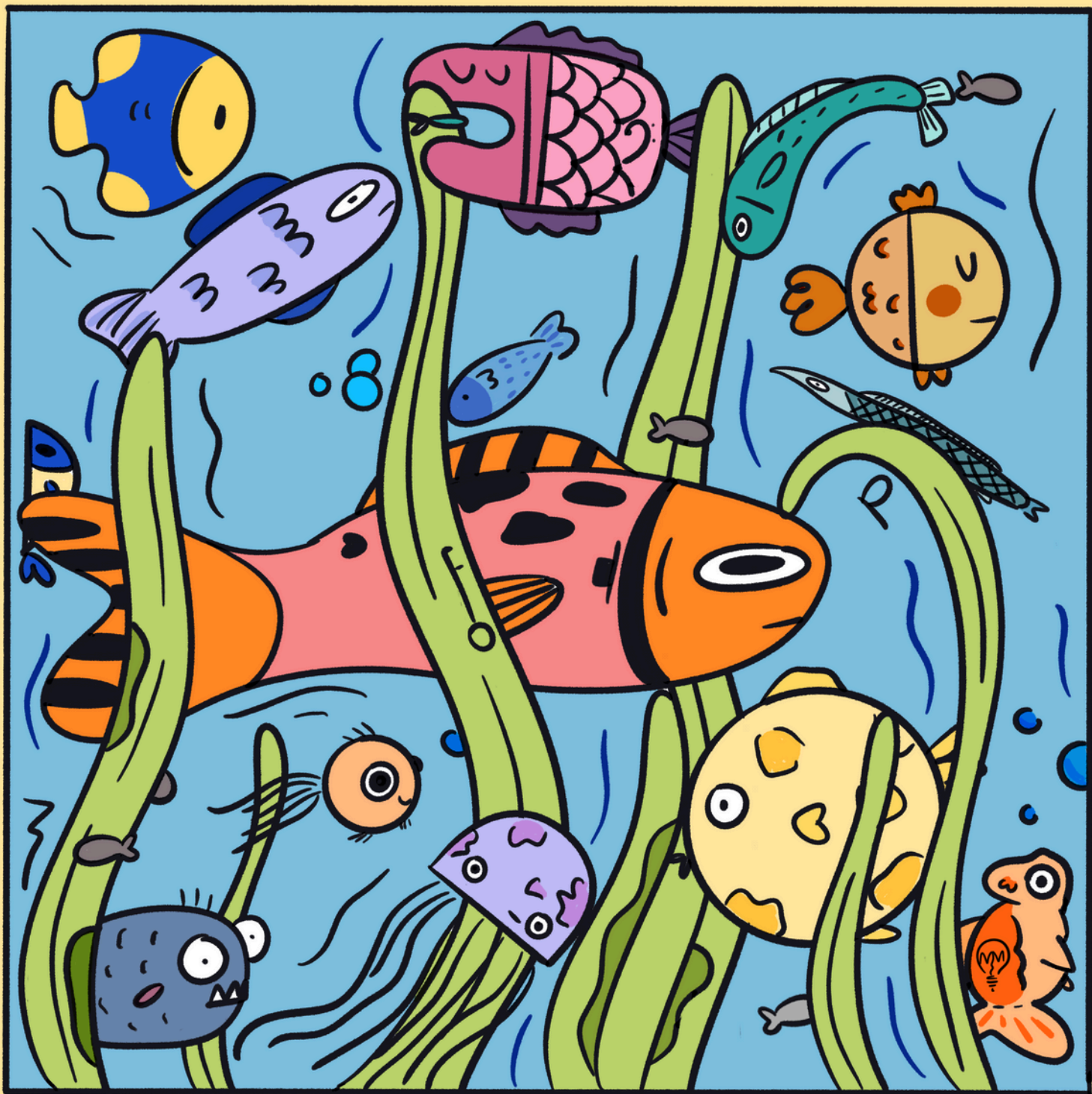
crescendo



quarter
rest



half
rest

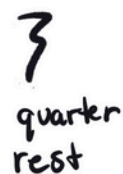
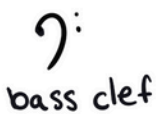


Seek
\$

Find



p
piano



THE MINDS BEHIND MINDFUL MUSICIANS: RUBY FITZGERALD

This article is the second in a series that offers a behind-the-scenes look at the talented individuals shaping Mindful Musicians, from composers and lyricists to graphic designers and teachers. Get to know the people who bring our music, lessons, and resources to life!

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.



Ruby Fitzgerald
Lyricist and Composer for Mindful Musicians

Can you tell us a little about yourself? What do you love to do for fun?

My name is Ruby. I am seven years old and my favorite color is teal. I have one sibling, she is eight months old, my baby sister Selah. My favorite thing to do is play with Selah and Mom. My mom is Callie Fitzgerald, founder of Centrally Rooted and Mindful Musicians! My dad is Kyle. I like to wrestle and build with him.

What's your favorite song that you've worked on with Mindful Musicians, and why?

I'm in most of them! But I really like Good kid, Square and Scream. Scream is on our new album the Red Album.

What's it like making music with your mom? Do you have a favorite memory of working together?

Really fun. I get to spend quality time with her. I really like making songs.

If you could describe Mindful Musicians in three words, what would they be?

Fun, Helpful, and Interactive.

What's a song that always makes you feel happy?

From our new album I like "Become What You Are". It's about not pretending to be someone you aren't just to fit in. Be unique and be yourself.

If you could write a song with any musician in the world, who would it be?

Callie Fitzgerald! Also... Taylor Swift, Olivia Rodrigo, or John Batiste

What's something fun about you that most people don't know?

I actually play a lot of instruments! Piano, ukulele, guitar, and a little of my mom's clarinet.

What was your favorite thing to do in class?

I don't think I can remember, but now my favorite thing is getting to play with Selah.

Was there a song you learned in class that stuck with you?

Ride! I used to sit my dolls on my lap and bounce them like in class, and now I do it with Selah.

THE MINDS BEHIND MINDFUL MUSICIANS: RUBY FITZGERALD CONTINUED

What's something you learned in class that still helps you today?

Square breathing. I use it when I'm mad sometimes.

How do you help come up with ideas for songs?

Mostly just being there and giving my mom ideas from my everyday life. It might be things I struggle with or what I need help with.

Can you tell us about a song where you shared your own feelings or struggles?

I wrote the song "Respect. It's about treating others how you want to be treated.

What's your favorite part about writing songs?

I get to spend time with Mom and Scott... and Selah! I already miss Scott even though we only recorded a few weeks ago.

What does it feel like when you hear kids singing a song you helped create?

I feel really proud!

If you could create a new song for Mindful Musicians, what would it be about?

It would be about helping kids know how to be the best big sibling. Helping their little siblings calm down and feel their emotions and how to comfort them.

When you feel sad or frustrated, what helps you feel better?

I usually take space in my room and breathe to help me calm down.

Is there a Mindful Musicians song that helps you when you're having a tough day?

Square or our new song Tappa.

What do you do when you feel really nervous? Is there a song that helps?

Ride! I used to sit my dolls on my lap and bounce them like in class, and now I do it with Selah.

What's something you learned in class that still helps you today?

The song Blue. It goes, "I am safe. I am calm. I am loved."

If a friend was feeling sad, what song would you sing to cheer them up?

Good Kid! And I would comfort them.

What's something cool you've learned about the brain?

Upstairs and Downstairs! The downstairs brain is kind of where your emotions are and it has to travel up the upstairs to the thinking brain. And kids aren't as good as grown ups because your staircase is still being built. It isn't all the way formed until you are grown up in your twenties.

Why do you think learning about emotions is important for kids?

It helps their brain health, handle their emotions, and it's really fun!

FROM PAGES TO PRACTICE

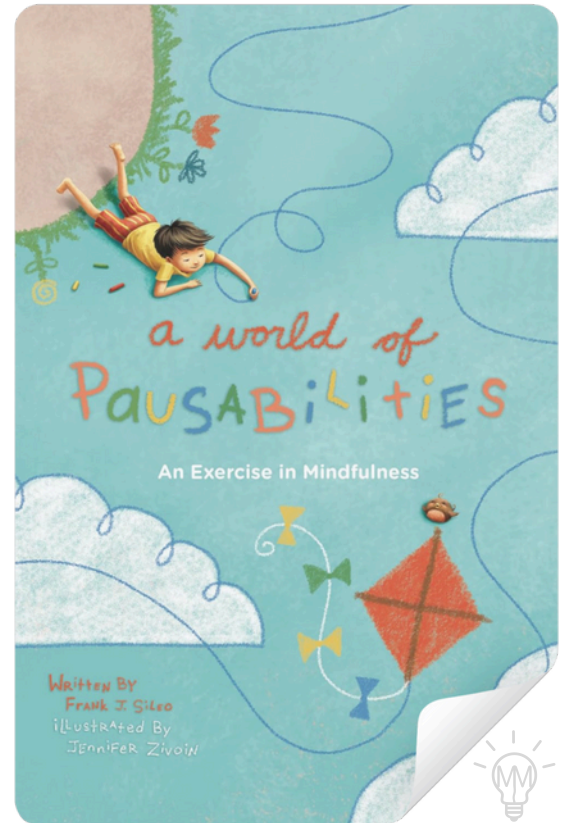
BY ANA MARIA LOCKE

This book review highlights books that parents might already be familiar with, but with a fresh perspective. Each book explores topics we sing about on the Mindful Musicians Green Album, offering new ways to connect music and meaningful lessons with your child

This month, we're focusing on the song "Square," which helps children learn to regulate their emotions by calming their nervous system. A wonderful companion to this is the book *A World of Pausabilities: An Exercise in Mindfulness* by Frank J. Sileo.

In this story you will be exploring the concept of mindfulness by encouraging them to take pauses throughout their day. The book presents various creative and accessible ways for kids to take these mindful breaks, helping them ground themselves and manage their emotions effectively.

Since pausing and self-regulation can be challenging skills to develop—for both children and adults—this book offers a range of strategies for children to explore and discover what works best for them in different situations.



Reflection Questions to use with your book:

Can you think of a time today when you took a pause? What did it feel like?

Which pause from the book would you like to try? Why?

How can taking a pause help you when you're feeling big emotions like anger or sadness?

Do you think it's hard or easy to pause during the day? Why?

What's one way you could remind yourself to take a pause when you need one?

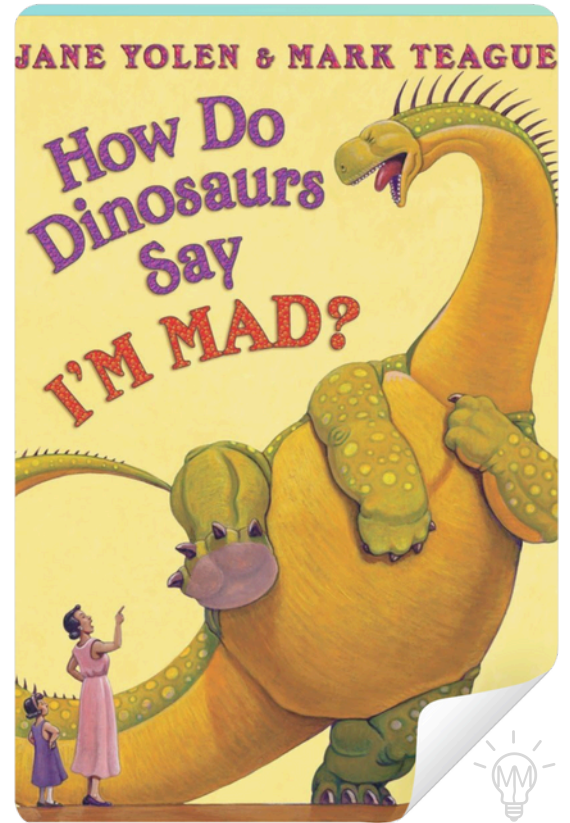
FROM PAGES TO PRACTICE

BY ANA MARIA LOCKE

This book review highlights books that parents might already be familiar with, but with a fresh perspective. Each book explores topics we sing about on the Mindful Musicians Green Album, offering new ways to connect music and meaningful lessons with your child

Using the square breathing technique is an amazing tool, but it's only truly helpful if a child is able to notice when they are becoming dysregulated. *How Do Dinosaurs Say I'm Mad?* by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague, cleverly demonstrates common ways young children express anger, but it does so through the eyes of dinosaurs, making the situations both humorous and relatable.

Through the dinosaurs' comedic mistakes, children are able to see what can go wrong when emotions take control. However, the story also shows the solution: the dinosaurs take a moment to pause, breathe, and regulate themselves. This serves as a great reminder that emotional regulation is the ability to transition from one emotion to another, helping children understand how they can respond to their feelings in a calm, thoughtful way.



Reflection Questions to use with your book:

How did the dinosaurs in the story beginning of the book show their anger?

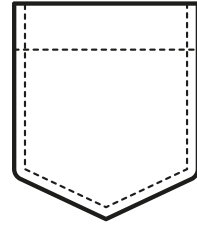
What did the dinosaurs do to calm down? How did that help them feel better?

How does taking a moment to breathe help you feel when you're upset or angry?

Think of a time when you were really mad. What could you do next time to pause and breathe, just like the dinosaurs?

Why do you think it's important to take a moment to calm down when we feel angry or upset?

POCKET PAUSE



Fold, cut, and create—a Pocket Pause to help you feel great!

DESCRIPTION

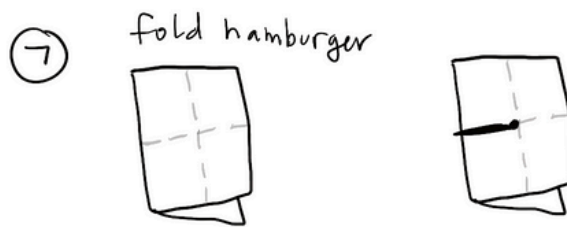
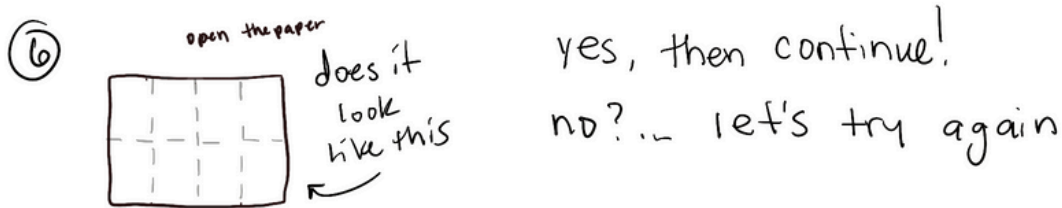
The Pocket Pause book is a small, portable tool designed to help kids calm down and feel better when they're having a tough time. It's filled with simple activities and calming ideas they can use to take a break, focus, and reset their emotions.

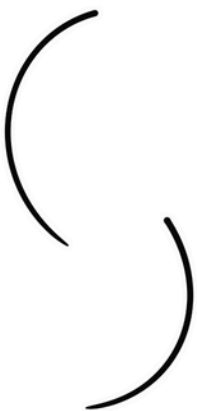
Easy to make and carry, the Pocket Pause empowers kids to practice self-regulation anytime, anywhere.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Print it out: Ask an adult to help you print the Pocket Pause page.
2. Fold it up: Follow the folding steps in the pictures carefully to make it into a book.
3. Cut the spot: Use scissors to cut along the line shown in the picture (ask for help if needed!).
4. Take it anywhere: Slip it into your pocket and use it when you need a moment to pause and relax!

Fold your Pocket Pause





Switch on your creativity!
Turn the two curved lines into something AMAZING!

How to draw a dragon



③



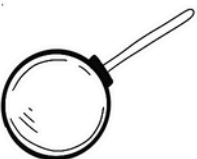
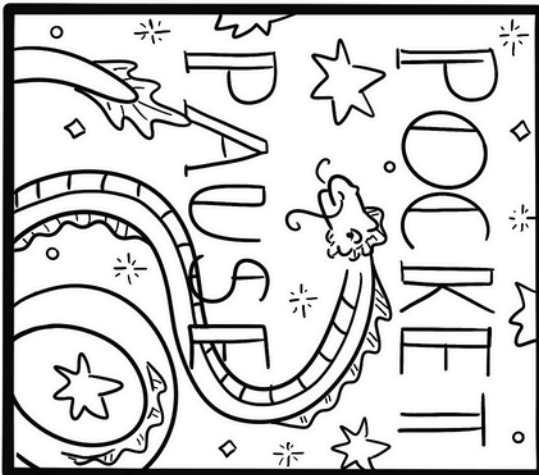
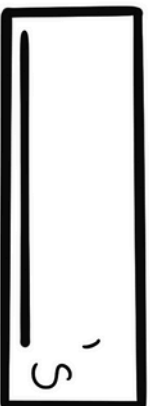
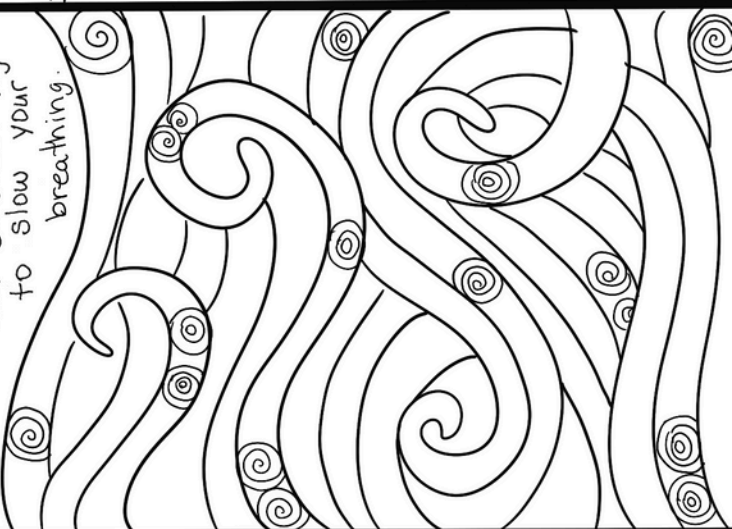
④

⑤



Feeling angry?
Try doing a slow hot
dragon breath through
your nose 5 times!

Fill the waves with spirals
and circles. Try
to slow your
breathing.



I Spy

- ☆ Something shiny
- ☆ Something dull
- ☆ 3 blue things
- ☆ 2 high-fives
- ☆ the sky
- ☆ Something bumpy
- ☆ a plant
- ☆ something hard

Feeling

Angry: I can

○ Squeeze my hands and release x 4

Bad: I can

○ Imagine my favorite place

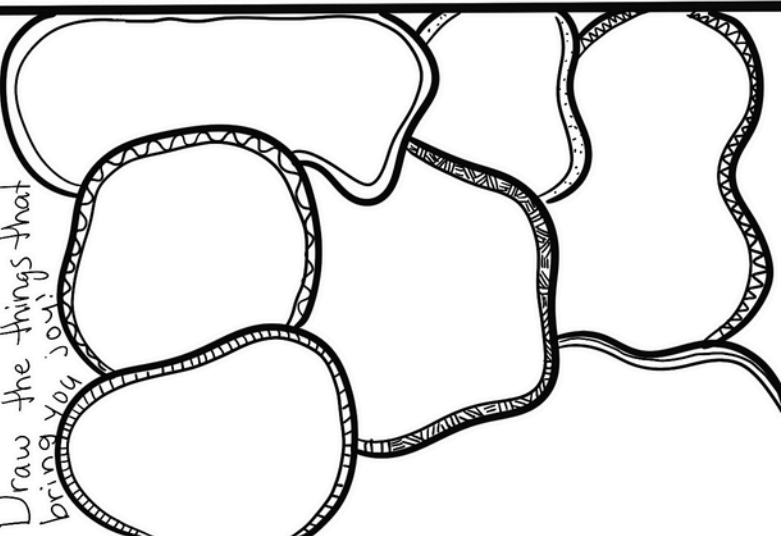
Unfocused: I can

○ stretch

Restless: I can

○ do 10 wall push ups

Draw the things that
bring you joy!



Word Search



Gentle
Calm

Memory
Balance
Feeling(s)

Energy
Focus

K G M E F A D B O G
W C S E N H V X V E
L Y F T M E M N X N
C M P R O R R Y T
K C J X S K R G T L
F O C V S N P Y E
L F N X A E C A Y M
F E E L I N G S L T
R B D B A L A N C E
E A O G B I N L W V



Ask Callie

"Ask Callie" is your chance to submit questions about music, mindfulness, and parenting—where we answer commonly asked questions to support you and your family's journey.

Q: What's the best way to introduce mindfulness to a young child who's never practiced it before? (Especially through music-based activities.)

Body percussion. We all have a natural drumset waiting to be played. I love to practice breathing through creating a beat on our bodies. When we are in moments of dysregulation, it is incredibly helpful if I embrace my daughter, create a drum beat on her back and encourage her to breathe with me. I typically breathe in (nose) four beats, out (mouth) five. As we calm, I lengthen the exhale breath since this is effective in calming the parasympathetic nervous system. The drum beat and counting creates a natural engagement of the left hemisphere, which generally gets us out of our emotional (right) brain and also helps us to calm down.

Q: How do Mindful Musicians songs help children connect with their emotions?

First, we give them language for all of their different emotions through lyrics and then by practicing what those emotions would feel like (in a neutral emotional state). This way, when we are actually feeling those emotions, they can more easily identify what they are feeling because they've "practiced" feeling this way before and have a word for it.

Q: Are there certain songs or activities you recommend starting with for toddlers or preschoolers? Why those?

I'd choose a song whose theme resonates with whatever your household is experiencing and hone in on one or two of the lines from that song. Language development is complex, so paring it down to make engaging more approachable is key. Also, repetition is key! You may be getting really sick of singing/chanting those few particular lines, but think of each repetition as a vitamin for their brains. They need (positive) repetitions to be able to practice with eventual success! As far as activities goes, something with rhythm is always great. Get your spoons tapping on the table at dinner or make a hand clapping game before bedtime!

Q: How do you keep children engaged in mindfulness practices when their attention spans are short?

Expect and remember that their attention spans are short. Celebrate whatever length of time it is that they were able to be mindful and don't push to make it longer. It's a practice and it will naturally grow as they do. Because we want it to be a relieving and safe activity, demanding or insisting upon a certain length of structured time could create a negative relationship with the experience.

Q: What should an adult do if a child resists participating in a mindfulness activity?

Validate that they are not wanting to participate, but if it's a practice that you, as the adult, still want to do, let them know that you're still going to do it. They are welcome to join back in, but also please respect that this is what you need/want to do. This teaches healthy communication and boundary setting in a firm, but soft way.

Ask Callie continued

Q: What role does movement play in the Mindful Musicians approach to teaching mindfulness?

Teaching kids to listen to their body is an important lesson. Movement is also crucial to a healthy lifestyle. Combining these elements is a great practice because it also allows us to challenge different developmentally appropriate movements. As you dance as home together, take their age into consideration, but be paying attention to if you can challenge them to go one step further (in a fun way!). For example, hopping on one foot, spinning around, crossing their hands to meet opposite shoulders. If you create a dance that is patterned, this helps develop the prefrontal cortex because of planning and organization. It can also help them develop confidence as their success rates increase with repetition.

How can caregivers or teachers support a child in using these mindfulness tools outside of class time?

Remind them of the tools they've acquired as they leave your presence and that they can use these anytime throughout the day. Remind them how much power they have; even though they don't always have control of what happens in their day, they've always got the ability to control themselves and how they react.

Q: How do you recommend talking about "big feelings" with young children using your songs?

Again, I think practicing the 'big feelings' when they are in a neutral or happier mood is a wise choice. Then when they are having a 'big feeling', try playing one of the songs that align with or mention their current feeling. Allow, encourage, and lead dancing wild and stomping to try to get that feeling to move along. With little ones, the fewer the words, the better. Modeling is much more effective.

Q: What should an adult do if a child resists participating in a mindfulness activity?

Validate that they are not wanting to participate, but if it's a practice that you, as the adult, still want to do, let them know that you're still going to do it. They are welcome to join back in, but also please respect that this is what you need/want to do. This teaches healthy communication and boundary setting in a firm, but soft way.

Q: How do your songs balance fun and silliness with teaching emotional regulation and mindfulness?

Hopefully you can sense the innate 'fun' within the music and it makes you want to sing along. Being silly is something we often lose sight of as adults, but I think it can be a really clever teaching tool. Even if you're putting on your acting face and playing the part of many different emotions (without poking fun), and asking your kiddo for suggestions on what you can do to feel differently, this can help them feel understood.



We would love to hear your questions! Send Callie an email at callie@mindfulmusicians.org



UNLOCKING THE LYRICS: SQUARE

By Ana Maria Locke

The song Square from the Green Album by Mindful Musicians introduces children to a powerful breathing technique known as box breathing. The lyrics are simple, reassuring, and grounding: “I can breathe and get back to me.” This line alone gently reminds children that even in moments of chaos or big emotions, they are still in control of themselves.

Box breathing—breathe in, hold, breathe out, hold—helps activate the “thinking” part of our brain, often called the “upstairs brain.” It invites children to pause, reset, and be present. It’s a practice that’s just as beneficial for adults, too. How often do we find ourselves needing to take a moment, to slow down and breathe before responding to the world around us?

Learning to regulate emotions through breath is a skill, and Square offers a developmentally appropriate way to begin. With its calm rhythm and empowering message, the song becomes more than just music—it’s a tool for emotional strength. It’s a gentle, musical stepping stone toward lifelong self-awareness and resilience.

**“It invites children to pause,
reset, and be present.”**

As a parent, being able to regulate myself feels like a superpower. And I’ll be honest—I’ve sung this song to calm myself down in everyday life, multiple times a day. Because of that, my child has learned to turn to square breathing on their own. That doesn’t mean they’ll do it every time I suggest it, or that they always love it in the moment—but I’ve noticed something beautiful. When they’re struggling, they’ll often ask to sit in my lap, feel their big feelings, and breathe in a square.

Growth isn’t linear, and emotional regulation takes time. But modeling this kind of self-care is one of the most powerful ways we can support our kids. Songs like Square offer a playful, gentle entry point into a lifelong practice of emotional awareness. They help weave mindfulness into the everyday moments, giving kids the tools they need to grow into adults who value taking care of themselves.

SQUARE

C-F-C-G-Am-C-G-G-

C F C G
I like shapes, they help me breathe
Am C G G
Follow me and make a square, we go
F C F C
In for 4 hold for 4
F C F C
Out for 4 hold again

C-F- C-G- Am-C- G-G-
In hold out hold
F C F C
In for 4 hold for 4
F C F C
Out for 4 hold for 4

C F C G
When the world is so busy
Am C G G
I can breathe and get back to me

F C F C
In for 4 hold for 4
F C F C
Out for 4 hold again

C-F- C-G Am-C- G-G-
In hold out hold

F C F C
In for 4 hold for 4
F C F C
Out for 4 hold again



“Square”- Square Bear

Materials Needed:

- print outs
- color crayons and pencils
- glue
- scissors
- laminating paper

Description:

This craft introduces children to a powerful coping tool: square breathing. It takes time to develop, but Square Bear makes learning this calming skill fun, visual, and comforting.

Instructions:

Start by listening to the song “Square” together. Let the rhythm set the tone and create a calm, focused space for the activity.

1. Children can either color and personalize their own Square Bear or use the pre-colored version to shorten the craft time. Both options work beautifully.
2. There are two sizes of Square Bear available. The large version is great for adults or educators to use for modeling. The small version includes four bears per page, perfect for kids to each take one home or carry with them.
3. Cut along the solid lines. Fold along the dotted lines—these show where to fold the paper in half before gluing or laminating.
4. To put it all together, you can laminate the folded piece for a sturdy, reusable Square Bear. Or, use stick glue (which works best) inside the folded square to keep it secure. No laminator needed!
5. Play the “Square” again and show children how to use Square Bear for square breathing.
6. Let the child know that Square Bear isn’t just adorable—they have a secret power. They’re experts at calming down, and they’re here to help.
7. Invite children to trace the square themselves while practicing their breathing.
8. Encourage kids to carry Square Bear with them and practice when they’re feeling calm and happy. This builds the skill so that when big emotions come, the tool is already familiar.
9. When a child feels overwhelmed or dysregulated, remind them they can use Square Bear to guide their breathing and return to a calmer place.

EXAMPLE

COLORED AND CUT



FOLDED IN HALF



ALL DONE!

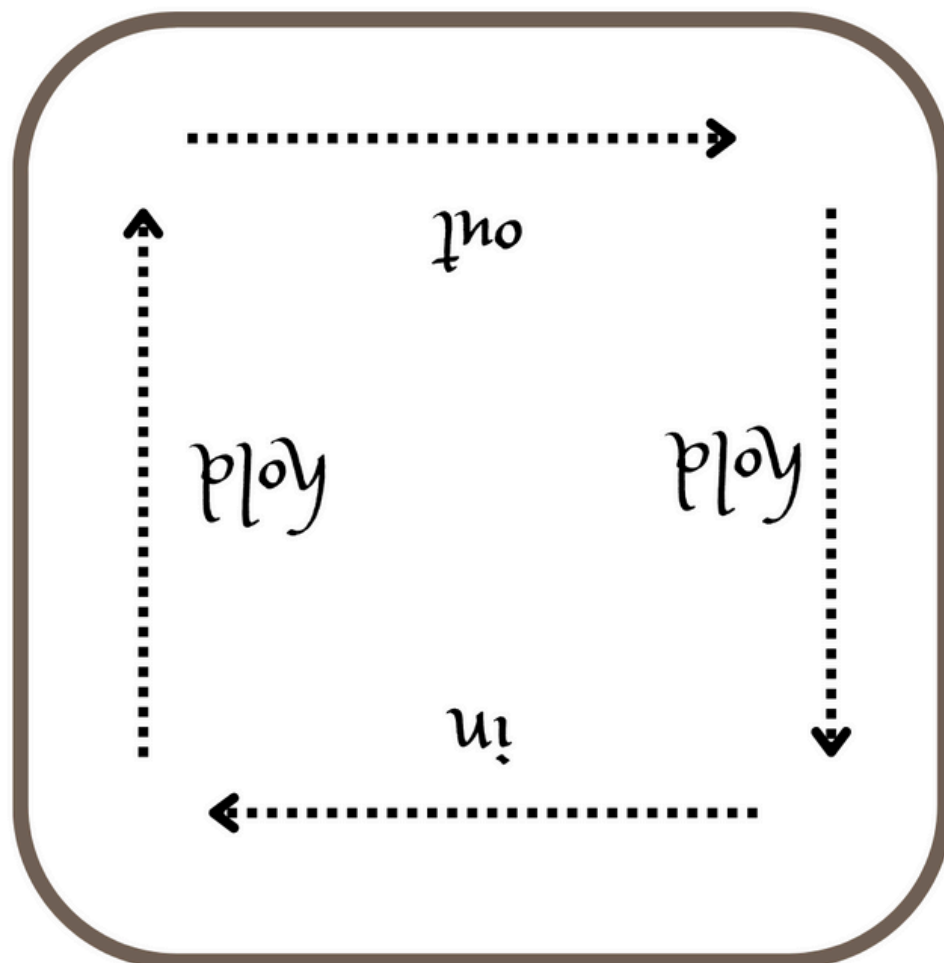
GLUED SHUT

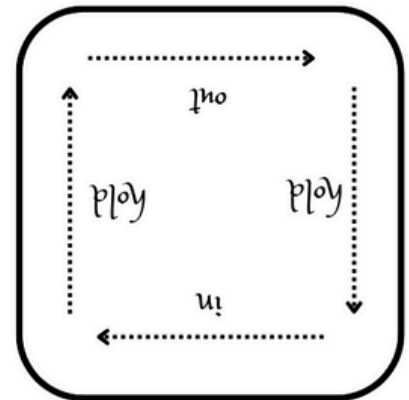
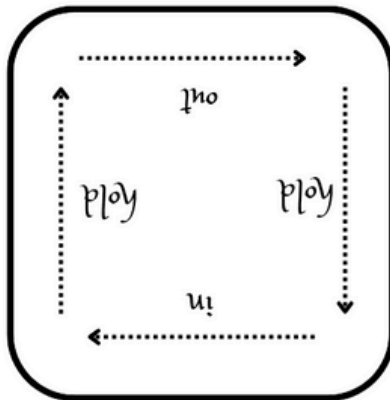
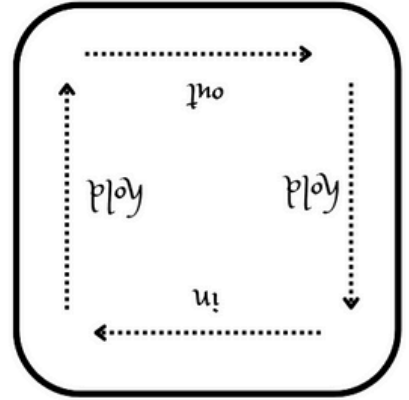
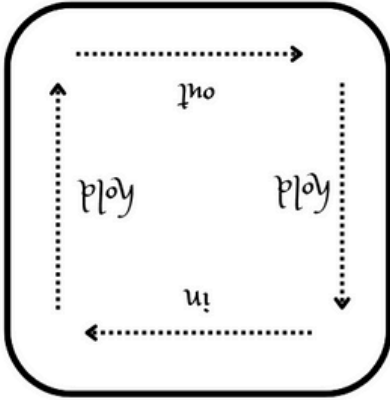


BACK
&

FRONT







I
CAN
BREATHE

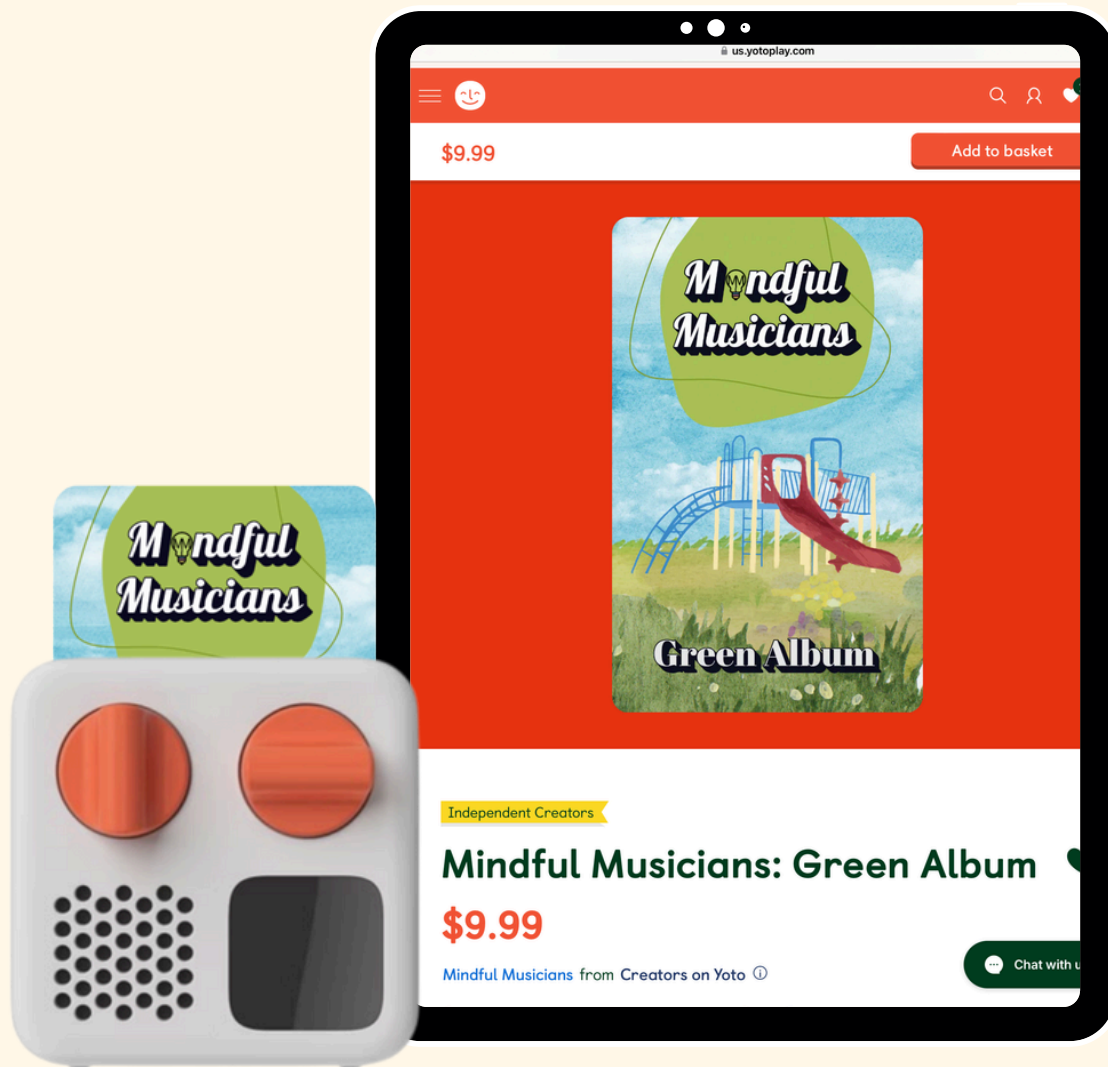


I
CAN
BREATHE



FIND US ON YOTO

provide an easy, screen-free way to incorporate music and mindfulness into your children's daily routine.



UNLOCK MINDFUL MUSIC

<https://us.yotoplay.com/products/mindful-musicians-green-album>