

ROOTED FAMILY MAGAZINE



A MINDFUL MUSICIANS PUBLICATION

DECEMBER 2025 — ISSUE 11



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.

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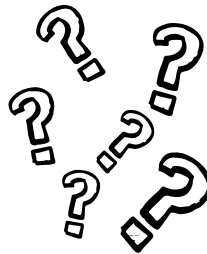
Printable activity for kids to take with them.



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

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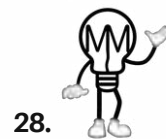
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Wait

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The Zzz... Menu is a simple, customizable bedtime guide that helps families choose calming, connecting rituals so the end of the day feels magical instead of rushed.



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Monthly Inspirational Poster





HELLO, FROM CALLIE

December arrived quietly this year—almost insistently—asking us to pause, reflect, and release.

This season finds me in a deep process of shedding and letting go. Earlier this month, our family experienced a house fire that destroyed our garage and everything in it. By grace alone, our home was spared. While the loss was real, what remains has been profoundly clarifying. In the aftermath, gratitude rose to the surface in an unexpected way, reminding me that the most meaningful things in life are not things at all.

This moment feels especially timely as we stand at the threshold of a new year—at the closing of the Year of the Snake, a symbol of release, renewal, and transformation. It feels like an invitation to ask: What are we still carrying that no longer serves us? What stories, fears, habits, or expectations are ready to be laid down as we move forward?

This month's featured song, "Wait," feels like a gentle companion to that question. It speaks to the discomfort of waiting—and the wisdom hidden inside it. Waiting is rarely easy, but the song reminds us that when we soften into it, when we make a kind of game of the waiting, time shifts. What felt heavy becomes lighter. What felt endless becomes spacious. Waiting, it turns out, can be a teacher.

We always have a choice. We can focus on what was lost, or we can orient ourselves toward the life still unfolding. We can settle into victimhood, or we can choose gratitude. Neither path denies reality—but only one makes space for growth, presence, and meaning.

Our family was displaced from our home for nine days. During that time, something remarkable happened. We were held—by people, by community, by a kind of grace that is easy to forget in an age of convenience and two-day shipping. Help arrived in ways both expected and surprising. Some who I assumed would show up did not. Others—people I never would have anticipated—offered immense presence, generosity, and care.

It was humbling. It was beautiful. And it was revealing.

In being forced to ask for help, I was reminded how deeply interconnected we are—how much we rely on one another, even when we believe we are self-sufficient. There is a quiet wisdom in being supported, in receiving, in allowing ourselves to be carried for a moment when we cannot carry everything alone.

I also want to offer my sincere gratitude for your patience. This issue is meeting you at the very end of the month rather than the middle, and your willingness to wait—to stay open and present with us through the delay—means more than I can say.

I choose to protect my thoughts by focusing on the beauty of life rather than the disappointments. That doesn't mean bypassing grief or ignoring what's hard—it means choosing where to place my attention. It means trusting that even the unexpected moments can become the soil for deeper connection, richer stories, and shared experiences that shape who we are becoming.

You have that choice, too.

As you wrap up this final month of the year, may you feel permission to let go—of what weighs you down, of what no longer fits, of what was never yours to carry. May you notice what remains when the excess falls away: the people, the relationships, the way you meet each moment with intention and care.

Thank you for being here, for waiting with us, and for continuing to walk this mindful path alongside us.

With immense gratitude,

Callie Fitzgerald



* Winter *

Seek and Find

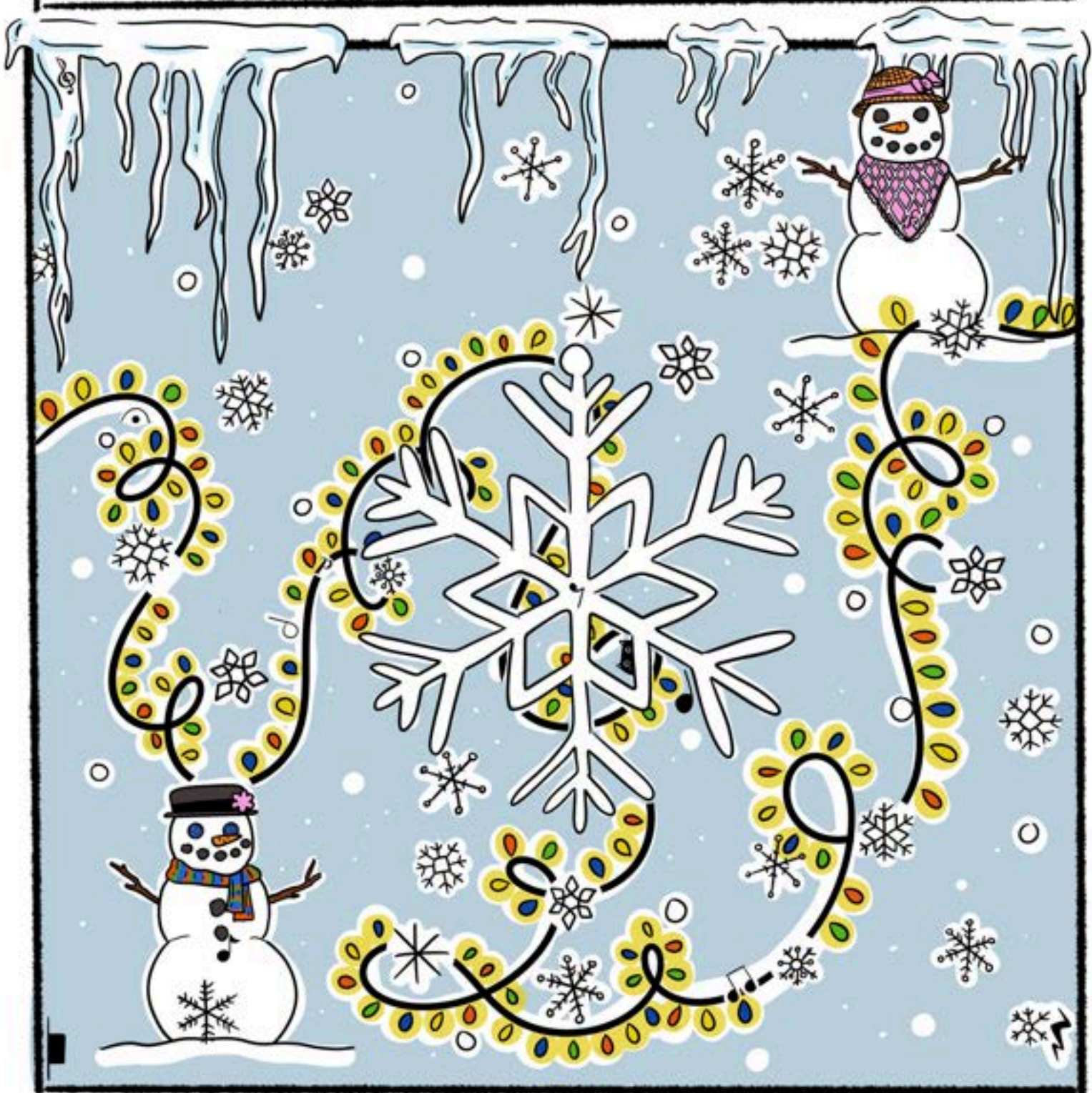


f

p



bonus: Cat

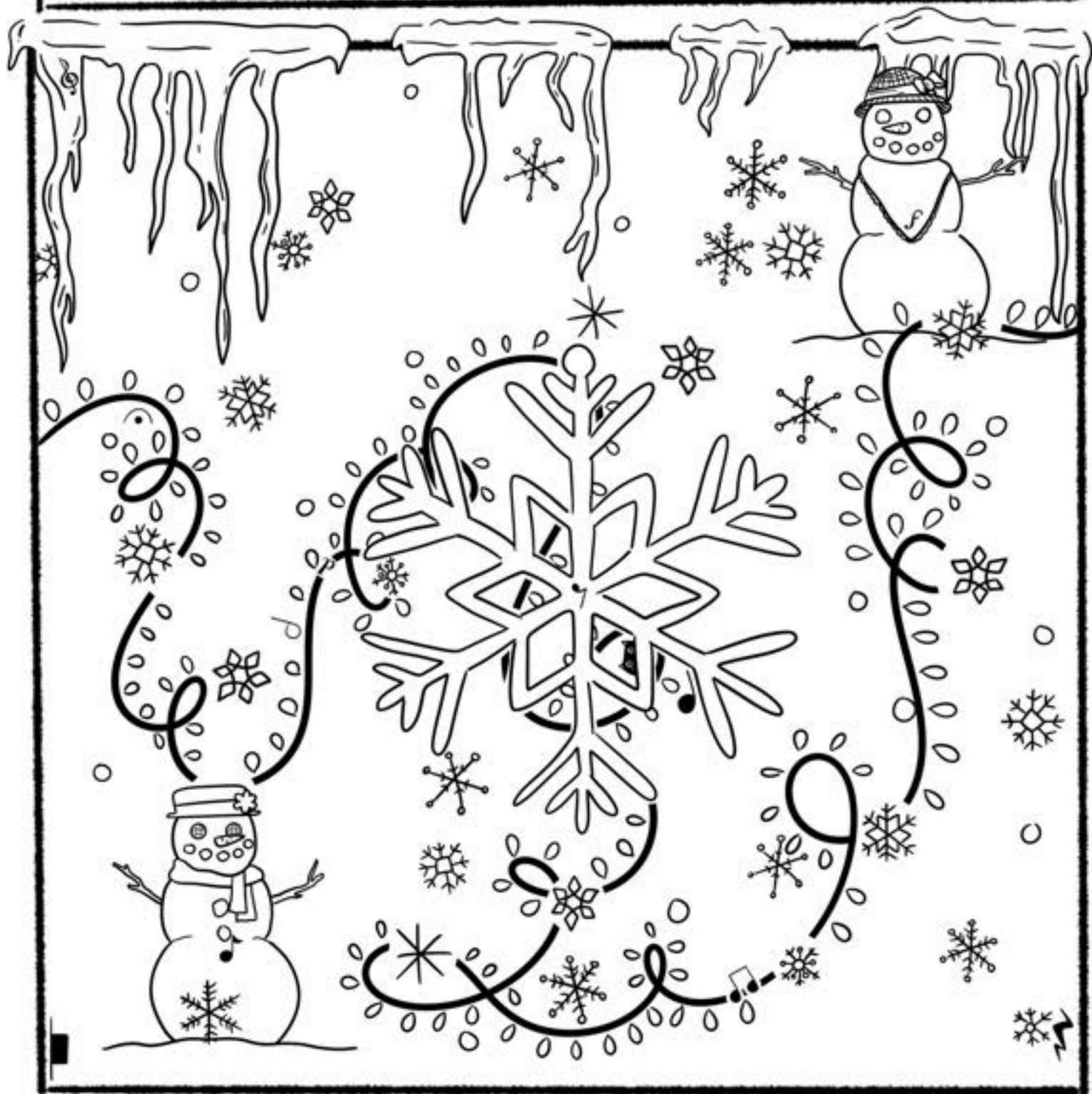


* Winter *

Seek and Find



bonus: cat



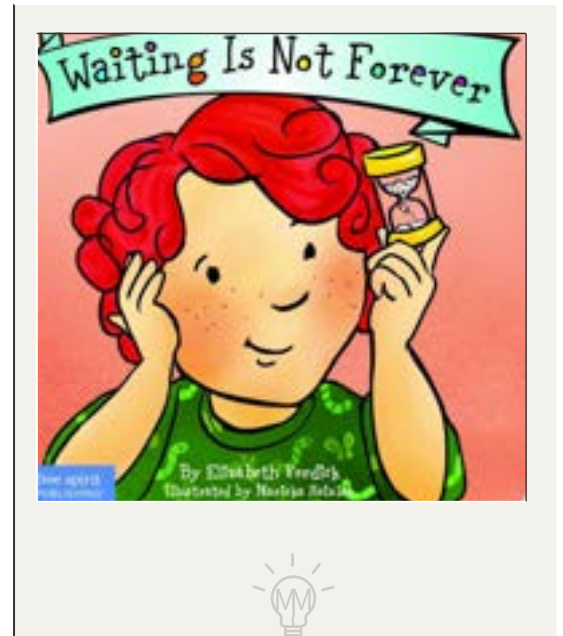
FROM PAGES TO PRACTICE

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

Waiting Is Not Forever by Elizabeth Verdick is an incredibly practical book that truly meets kids at their level. It offers plenty of relatable, real-life examples—both big and small—that children can easily understand, from simple moments like waiting in line to more challenging situations like waiting to get better at something. As a parent, those bigger concepts can be hard to put into words, and this book does that work beautifully.

This is a wonderful resource for opening up conversations with kids about waiting and patience because it provides concrete, real-life strategies children can actually use, along with clear ways adults can support them in the learning process. Paired with the “Wait” song, which has a catchy tune, and an accompanying game, the message is reinforced in a fun and engaging way. Having the book, music, and play all wrapped into one makes this combination especially effective.



Reflection Questions to use with your book:

1. What are some things that are hard to wait for during this time of year?
2. What are some things you think grown-ups do to help themselves wait?
3. What are things you like to do while you're waiting?
4. How does it feel in your body when you're anticipating something really exciting?
5. What helps you feel calmer when waiting feels hard?
6. Can you think of a time when waiting turned out to be worth it?

Tip* After they answer, offer your personal experiences as a child and adult to build connection and show empathy.

FROM PAGES TO PRACTICE

PART 2

Mo Willems's *Waiting Is Not Easy!* is a great way to approach the topic of waiting in a lighthearted, relatable way that's sure to make your kiddo giggle. Even their favorite characters don't like to wait—but sometimes, it really is worth it.

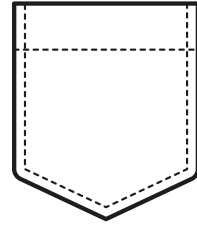
As we were reading, we couldn't help but think that Gerald could have used our song "Wait." We won't spoil the ending, but trust us—the ending is worth the wait. Check it out at your local library today.



Reflection Questions to use with your book:

1. How did Gerald feel while he was waiting?
2. Did his feelings change at all by the end of the story?
3. What are some things you don't like waiting for?
4. How does your body feel when you have to wait?
5. What helped Gerald keep going while he waited?
6. What helps you when waiting feels hard?
7. Was the ending worth the wait? Why or why not?
8. Can you think of a time when waiting was worth it for you?
9. If you had to wait like Gerald, what could you do to make it more fun?

POCKET PAUSE



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

DESCRIPTION

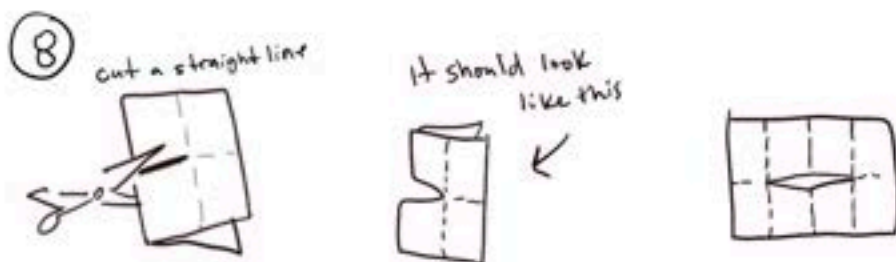
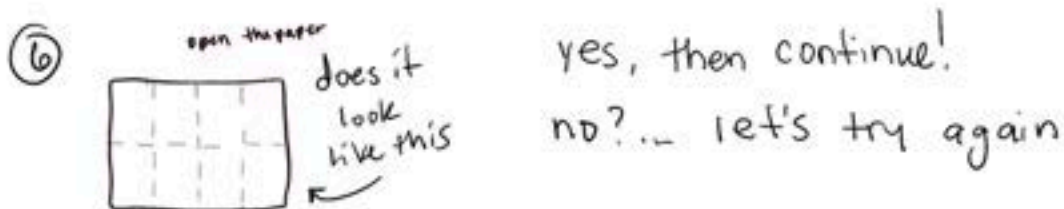
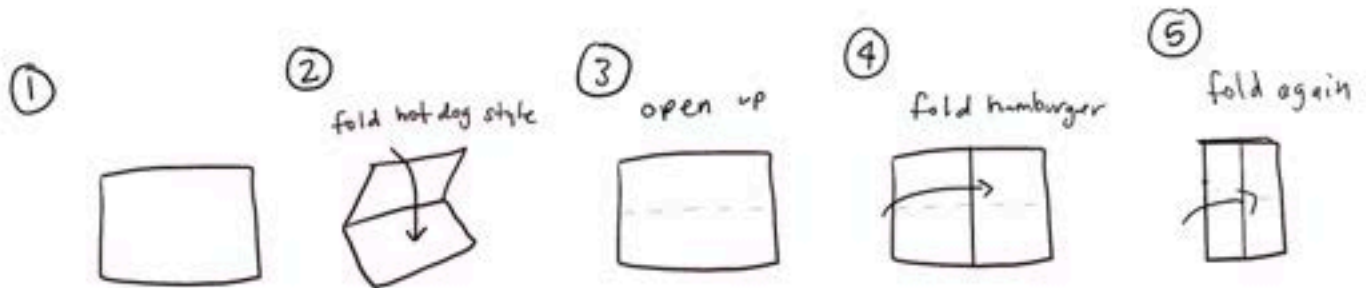
The Pocket Pause book is a small, portable tool designed to help kids calm down and feel better when they're having a tough time. It's filled with simple activities and calming ideas they can use to take a break, focus, and reset their emotions.

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



POCKET PAUSE

SPY

☆ 5 animals

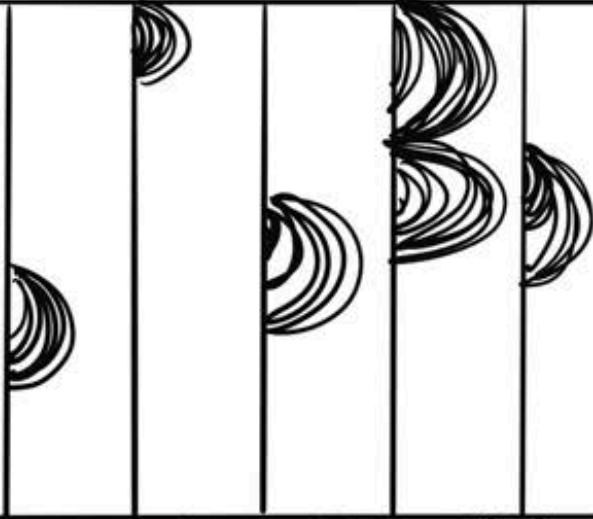
☆ 4 plants

☆ 3 red things

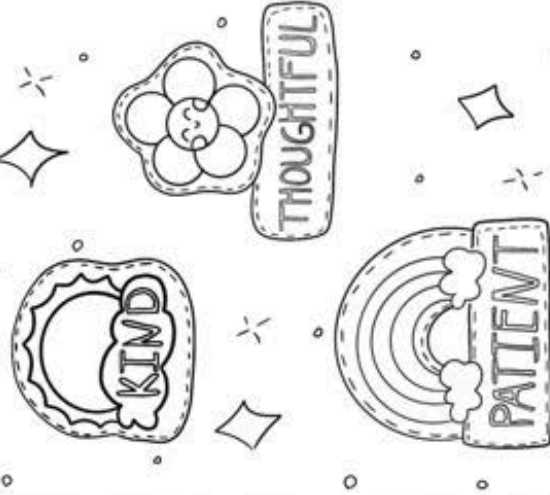
☆ 2 frog jumps

☆ 1 hug

Pause. Lets scribble and breathe.



To earn each badge, complete one act of kindness, one thoughtful gesture, and one demonstration of patience. Color in each badge as you complete the actions.



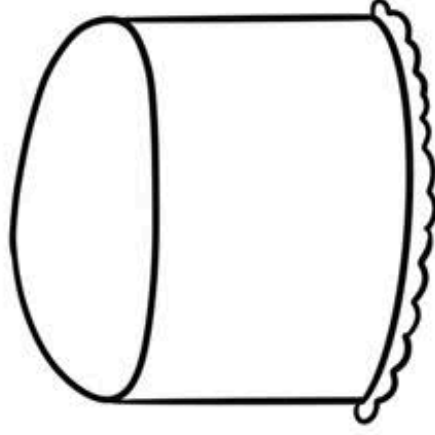
Can you find these words:
together laughter joy kind safe love breathe

T	O	J	B	S	B
O	L	J	O	S	R
G	A	O	V	A	E
E	U	Y	V	F	A
T	G	E	Y	E	T
H	H	L	K	L	H
E	T	U	I	O	E
R	E	A	N	V	H
T	R	G	D	E	U

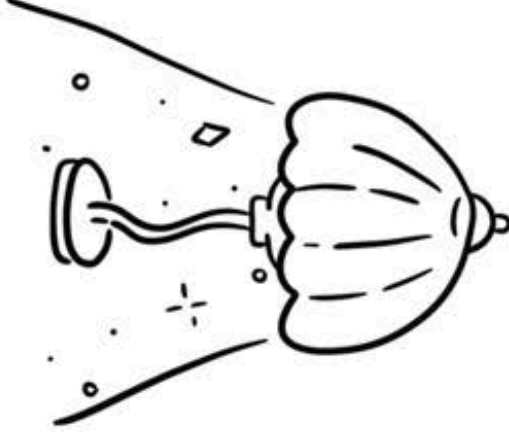
Write a letter of love to yourself to read when you are having a tough day.

Dear Me,

Sometimes giving your brain time to do something else can help you calm down. Like decorating this cake! Decorate your dream cake here. →



Imagine you are in a dark room that represents a tough feeling. Take a deep breath and imagine turning on this lamp. What colors do you want to shine from this light to represent the love you have for yourself.





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.

Q1. Why is musical engagement so powerful for young children—especially in the early years?

Music engages the whole brain. Neurologically, it supports language development, executive functioning, memory, emotional regulation, and motor coordination—all at once. For young children, music isn't something they learn; it's something they experience. Rhythm, melody, and repetition help wire neural pathways during critical windows of development, laying a foundation for learning, resilience, and creativity later in life.

Q2. Is music really doing something in my child's brain, or does it just feel good?

It's both. Studies show that music strengthens connections in the brain, especially during early development. Rhythm helps with timing and focus, melody supports language and memory, and repetition builds neural pathways. So when your child is singing, swaying, or listening, their brain is actively growing—even if it looks like play.

Q3. How does music support bonding between children and their caregivers?

When caregivers sing, move, or listen to music with children, their nervous systems begin to synchronize. This process—called co-regulation—helps children feel safe, seen, and emotionally held. Music creates shared moments of presence without requiring words, which is especially powerful for preverbal children. These moments build trust, attachment, and a deep sense of connection.

Q4. I'm not a musician. Can I still meaningfully engage in music with my child?

Absolutely. You don't need training, a "good voice," or any technical skill. Children are not looking for performance—they're looking for presence. Humming, clapping, listening together, or gently moving to music is more than enough. Your willingness to participate matters far more than how it sounds.

Ask Callie continued

Q5. How is Mindful Musicians different from other kids' music?

Mindful Musicians is designed to support calm, connection, and emotional awareness. Instead of overstimulation, we focus on simplicity, space, and intention. The music is created to support regulation—for children and caregivers—so it can become part of your daily rhythm rather than background noise.

Q6. What can families do to help Mindful Musicians grow?

One of the easiest ways is by sharing the music. Listening on Spotify or Apple Music and sharing with friends, teachers, or other parents helps this kind of mindful music reach more families. When you share, you're helping normalize a slower, more connected approach to children's music.

Q7. What's ahead for Mindful Musicians in the coming year?

We're stepping into a season of growth. Our hopes include expanding into schools, supporting the replication of in-person Mindful Musicians classes, and deepening our offerings for families through subscriptions. We're also exploring additional layers of connection—such as parent gatherings, expanded resources, and possibly live concerts. All of this is unfolding thoughtfully and intentionally.

Q8. How do subscriptions fit into all of this?

Subscriptions help make this work sustainable. They support new music, resources, and community offerings. We're also exploring additional subscription tiers that may include parent gatherings, live experiences, and deeper connection—all designed to support families, not overwhelm them.

Q9. What is your hope for the Mindful Musicians community as it grows?

My hope is that Mindful Musicians becomes not just something families use, but something they belong to. A shared language around presence, care, and music as a tool for connection. If we can help children—and the adults who love them—feel more regulated, more connected, and more alive in everyday moments, then we're doing meaningful work.



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



WAITING IS WHERE STRENGTH GROWS

By Ana Maria Locke



There's a kind of resilience you can only get when you're up against friction—resistance, difficulty, the hard part of waiting. I don't just mean waiting for an ice cream cone. I mean waiting to get better at something. Waiting while strength is being built.

The song "Wait" doesn't tell you, "It'll be here in a minute," or that everything is going to be easy. It tells you the truth: there is a path you have to take. There is time between starting something and being good at it, between wanting something and actually getting there.

I know this song is, very literally, a great way to pass the time. But one of the things I love most about it is its creativity—and its embracing of the simple. It encourages children, while they are literally waiting, to be creative.

Because as they get older, they will remember this simple song. That six-and-a-half-year-old will be nineteen someday, in college, studying for a test at the end of the semester, counting the days until she can come home and wash mountains of laundry. I imagine her sitting at her laptop, tired, wishing she didn't have to wait—wanting it to be over, wanting to be home now.

And maybe this song pops into her head. She remembers how she didn't want to wait then either. And she thinks, 'If I have to study, I can at least make it fun.' She finds creative ways to study. She takes care of herself. She inspires her friends.

And that, in itself, is a superpower.

When she takes that test, the stress won't magically disappear. But maybe the song pops back into her mind again. Maybe she feels proud of herself—not because it was easy, but because she did her best, stayed resilient, and reached her goal.

If you can't embrace that everything worth doing is worth working for, all you'll see along the way are the difficulties. This is something I still struggle with—to this day—as a professional clarinetist, an amateur crafter, and a parent.

Some kinds of waiting are easier than others. As a parent, waiting for my child to have the patience of a 20-year-old when she's only six and a half is hard. But it's not so different from learning a difficult passage in music, or waiting to watch my favorite show until the dishes are done. I know the time will come. The waiting may be hard, but it will be worth it. And I'll be there with her the whole way—holding her hand, walking beside her, and trying to find the joy in the waiting.

As a parent, I want you to know this: I see you. I believe in you. The patience you're practicing, the time you're taking to guide your child through the hard parts—it matters. You are shaping their future, even when it doesn't feel like it.

WAIT

/A/Chorus: I-ee-I-ee-I don't wanna wait (2-3-4 - stomp)
Yea i-ee-i-ee-i just want it now (2-3-4-stomp)
If we-ee-ee still have to wait (2-3-4-stomp)
Let's play-ee-ay-ee-ay a game somehow (2-3-4-stomp)

/B/Verse: Our toes goes a-tap, tap, tap, tap-tap
While our hands go a-clap, clap, clap, clap-clap
And our bodies go wiggle wiggle wiggle
ya hoo (arch hands/arms in a rainbow to the floor)

Chorus:/A/

/C/Verse:
Our knees go a-knock, knock, knock, knock-knock
While our heads go a-nod, nod, nod, nod, nod-nod
And our hands go clap a-clap a-clap ya hoo

Chorus/A/

Verse: /D/
Our hips go a-swish, swish, swish, swish-swish
While our fingers go snap, snap, snap, snap-snap
And our feet go run, run, run, run, run yahoo

Chorus/A/

"Oh look! The waiting is over!"/E/



My 2026 Calendar Art Book

Materials Needed:

- Printed monthly calendars for January–December 2026
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, or paint
- Stickers or decorative supplies (optional)
- Pencil or pen
- Clipboard, binder, or wall space for display

Description:

In this craft, children will turn printed calendars from January–December 2026 into a year-long art collection. Each month features a beautiful frame where children will create their own artwork—because their creations deserve to be displayed and celebrated. This activity also helps children understand time, practice patience, and take ownership of marking each day as it passes.

Instructions:

Give each child their set of calendars. Explain that each month is a work of art they get to create and display.

1. At the beginning of each month, children draw or decorate the picture frame on that month's calendar however they like.
2. Help children circle important or exciting dates, such as birthdays, holidays, or special events.
3. Each day, the child gets to mark off the day as it passes. This helps them practice waiting and understanding time.
4. Display the calendar where the child can see it and enjoy their artwork all month long.





January 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

"I can do hard things."



February 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

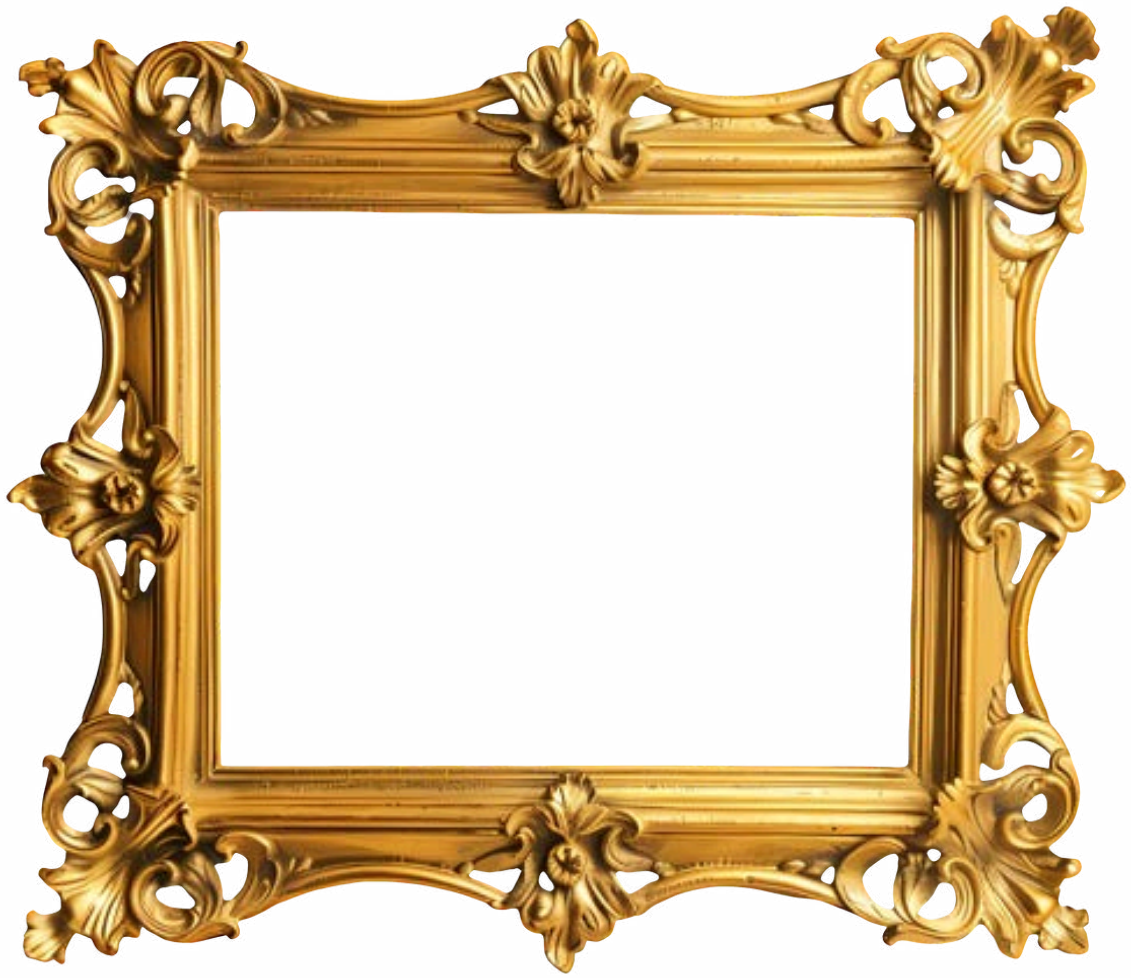
"Try, try , try again!"



March 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

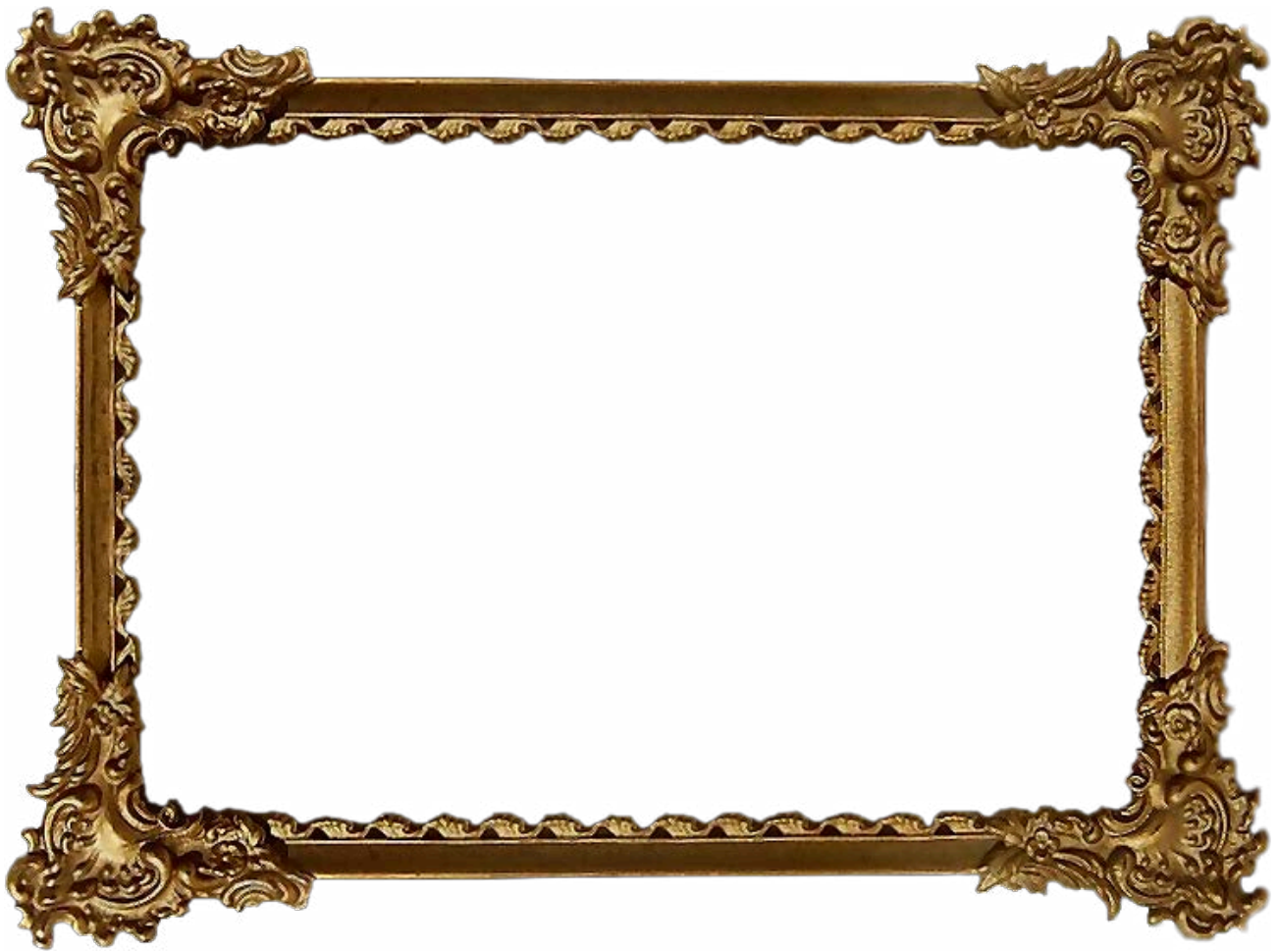
"In, hold, out, hold."



April 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

"I am somebody today!"



May 2026

<i>S</i>	M	T	W	T	F	<i>S</i>
					1	<i>2</i>
<i>3</i>	4	5	6	7	8	<i>9</i>
<i>10</i>	11	12	13	14	15	<i>16</i>
<i>17</i>	18	19	20	21	22	<i>23</i>
<i>24</i>	25	26	27	28	29	<i>30</i>
<i>31</i>						

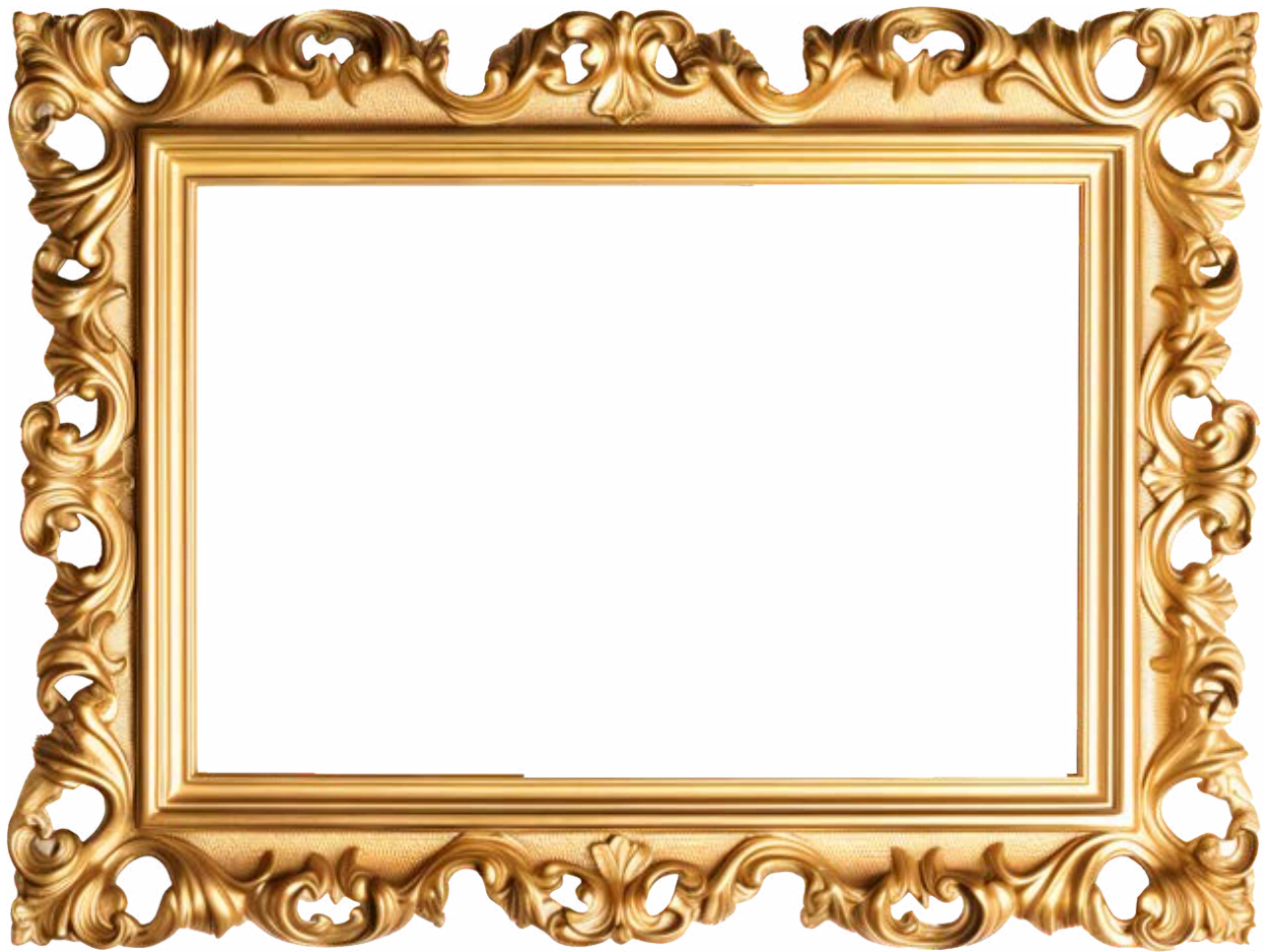
"I'm a good kid."



June 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

"I care about myself. I care about you too"



July 2026

<i>S</i>	M	T	W	T	F	<i>S</i>
			1	2	3	<i>4</i>
<i>5</i>	6	7	8	9	10	<i>11</i>
<i>12</i>	13	14	15	16	17	<i>18</i>
<i>19</i>	20	21	22	23	24	<i>25</i>
<i>26</i>	27	28	29	30	31	

"It's okay to say no."



August 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

"I'm rooted in central."



September 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

"If you're curious...just ask!"



October 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

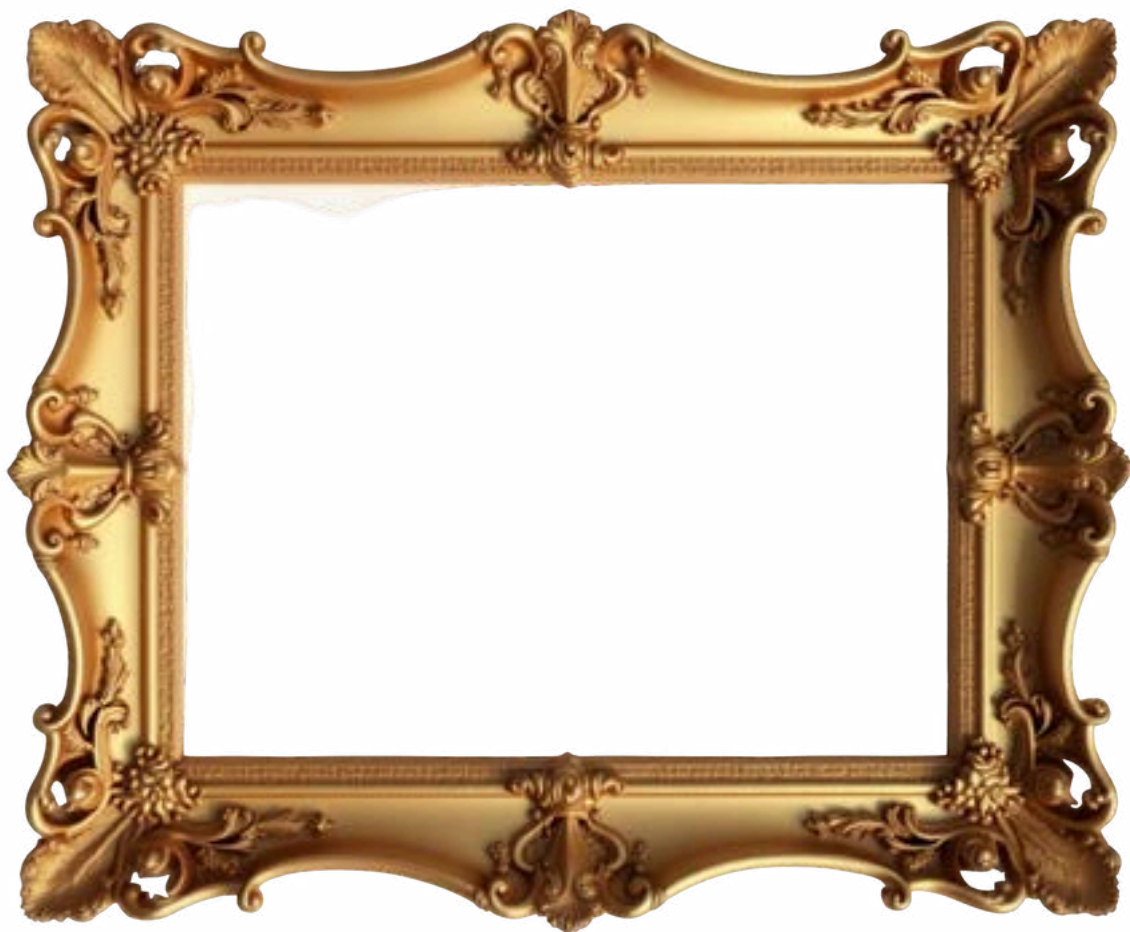
"Keep your head up, and don't give up."



November 2026

<i>S</i>	M	T	W	T	F	<i>S</i>
<i>1</i>	2	3	4	5	6	<i>7</i>
<i>8</i>	9	10	11	12	13	<i>14</i>
<i>15</i>	16	17	18	19	20	<i>21</i>
<i>22</i>	23	24	25	26	27	<i>28</i>
<i>29</i>	30					

"There are some things I just have to do."



December 2026

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

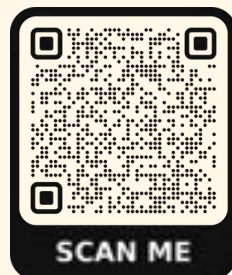
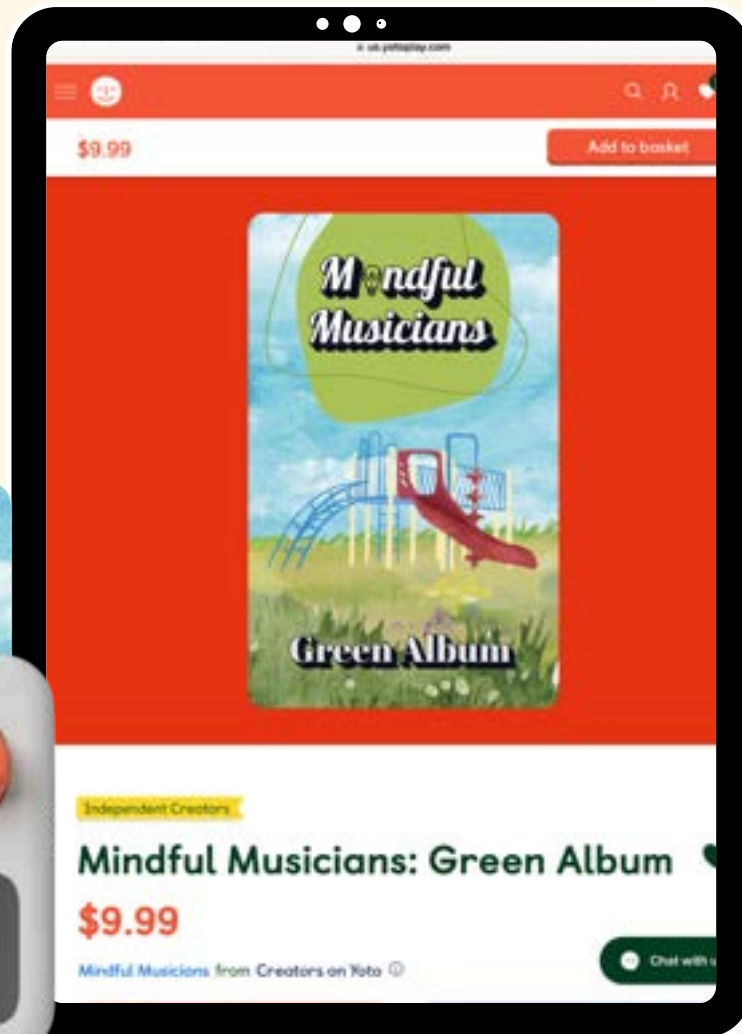
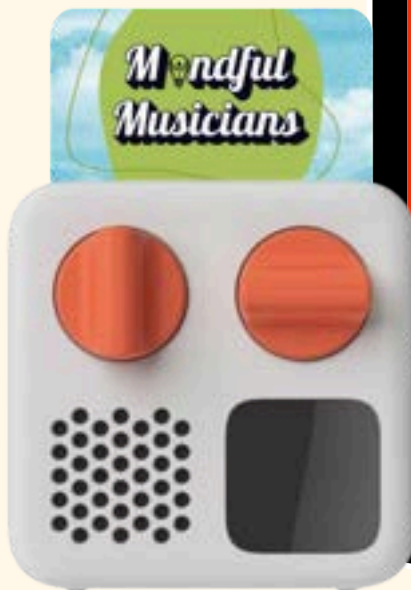
"I'm with you through it all."





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>