



Transformative Teaching Toolkit

# How To Inspire Creativity in Your Classroom



Breathe For Creativity



# Toolkit Overview

## Breathe For Creativity

Ready to embrace your inner superpower? This Transformative Teaching Toolkit will equip you to inspire creativity in your classroom and school community. These innovative practices will help you and your students tap into your inherent creative brilliance, and spark inspiration throughout your learning environment. Through bringing our curriculum to life, you and your community will learn to creatively overcome obstacles, embrace full self expression, and find your flow.

This toolkit includes a Breathe For Creativity theme overview you can share with your students, colleagues, and families, and a wide range of innovative wellness, mindfulness, and self expression strategies you can teach to your students and staff. All practices are CASEL-aligned and differentiated for primary, secondary, and adult education. Each strategy includes a step-by-step description, reflection questions, and scaffolded pedagogical pointers that you can draw on to bring the practice to life.

We are so excited for you to integrate these practices into your teaching, and ignite creativity in your classroom and school community as a result!



# BREATHE FOR CREATIVITY

## LIVING YOUR FULLY EXPRESSED SELF



*You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.*  
— **Maya Angelou**

*What keeps life fascinating is the constant creativity of the soul.*  
— **Deepak Chopra**

*Creativity is contagious, pass it on.*  
— **Albert Einstein**



*There is no innovation and creativity without failure.*  
— **Brene Brown**

*One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world.*  
— **Malala Yousafzai**



## BREATHE FOR CREATIVITY

In Breathe For Creativity, we learn to tap more fully into the inherent creative capacity of our minds and bodies in order to fulfill our intentions. We all have the ability to choose our mindset, shift our perspectives, and direct our focus. We can learn to harness this capacity and intentionally use it to overcome barriers and unleash our potential. In doing so, we actively shape our minds, our bodies, our relationships, and our experience of the world around us for the better.

Our minds and bodies work together in a cyclical evolutionary dance: we take in information through the body's senses and emotions, and based on that information, we think and make choices in the mind that then guide the body's actions. These actions lead to new sensory and emotional information, and the cycle repeats itself—causing both the mind and the body to grow and evolve along the way.

The beautiful thing is that every single one of us has the opportunity to leverage this cycle to grow more and more into who we want to become. Neuroplasticity refers to the brain's lifelong ability to reorganize and reshape itself by forming new neural connections. When we focus on specific thoughts, or make choices that lead to certain situations, we are not only shifting our present-moment experience; that experience is also shifting the neural networks in our brain.<sup>1</sup>

Every single one of us has the capacity to consciously shift our experiences by focusing our thoughts in healthy ways and making positive choices. As world renowned neuroscientist Dr. Richard Davidson puts it: "Well-being can be learned. It's analogous to skills training: it is through repeated practice that connections get established in the brain that support the new skill or habit."<sup>2</sup>

Our bodies are continually evolving based on our experience. Our muscle, organ, and tissue development are influenced by our eating and exercise habits, our thoughts and emotions, and even our interactions with others.<sup>3</sup> Even our DNA has been shown to shift expression based on experiences, environments, and training—an area of study known as epigenetics.<sup>4</sup>

Our body's adaptive nature and our brain's neuroplasticity provide us with incredible creative power. So how do we learn to intentionally use it? Most of us have received minimal education on how to consciously shape our own perspectives and experiences (that's one of the things Breathe For Change is out to change for the future!) Luckily, it's never too late.

Research shows that neuroplasticity remains in effect throughout our lifetime, as do the body's mechanisms of growth and evolution.<sup>5</sup> With the understanding that all of our thoughts, experiences, and actions influence our minds and bodies over time, we can begin to use our intentions and willpower to choose positive ones. By making mindful choices and developing mindful habits, we give ourselves the space to express our creative power and become more and more of who we want to be.

Right now you have the opportunity to embrace your best self by channeling your creative energy in a positive direction. Give yourself permission to try new routines and make new choices, and take the time to mindfully reflect on how these routines and choices make you feel. This will help you tap into your innate creativity in all moments—and make the most of the magnificent gifts you have to offer.

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2 Davidson, R. J. (2014, March). Change your Brain by Transforming the Mind [Washington University in St. Louis Witherspoon Memorial Lecture on Religion and Science]. <https://magazine.wustl.edu/2014/april/Pages/Neuroscientist-Richard-Davidson-on-Well-being.aspx>

3 Heaphy, E. D., & Dutton, J. E. (2008). Positive social interactions and the human body at work Linking organizations and physiology. *Academy of Management Review*, 33(1), 137-62.

4 Jaenisch, R., & Bird, A. (2003). Epigenetic regulation of gene expression: how the genome integrates intrinsic and environmental signals. *Nature genetics*, 33, 245-254.

5 Kempermann, G., Gast, D., & Gage, F. H. (2002). Neuroplasticity in old age: Sustained fivefold induction of hippocampal neurogenesis by long-term environmental enrichment. *Annals of neurology*, 52(2), 135-143.



## FIND YOUR FLOW



### B4C Theme

Breathe For Creativity

### SEL\*F Component

Settle In, Mindful Movement, Creative Expression

### SEL Competency

Self-Awareness, Social Awareness

### SEL Purpose

Inspires full self expression, promotes creativity, increases energy

### Materials

Breathe For Change's [Breathe For Creativity Hip Hop Song](#), [Breathe For Creativity Playlist](#), or any song you love that inspires creative movement

## DESCRIPTION

1. The intention of this practice is for us to find our flow — or said another way, to tap into our creativity! When we are in flow, or in our zone, we are better equipped to manifest our visions for ourselves into action!
2. I invite you to find a comfortable position that allows you to tap into your creative flow! Feel free to sit or stand, whatever best helps you tap into your creative energy.
3. I am now going to play a fun song, and invite you to move your body in a way that allows you to fully express yourself. You can keep your eyes open and share in the movement together, or close your eyes if you'd like a more inward experience. (Play the Breathe For Creativity Hip Hop Song, a Breathe For Creativity playlist song, or another song you enjoy.)
4. Let yourself move to the music in a way that allows you to express your creative energy. I encourage you to let go of any fears, doubts, or concerns about what others may think, and instead just give yourself permission to play and move!
5. (Model what full self expression looks like for you to inspire participation).
6. When we find our flow, we create more space for our brilliant ideas to surface and transform into action!
7. As you continue to breathe and move your bodies to the music, let your flow interact with the flow of your friends! Notice how their flow impacts your own!
8. Now, I invite you to mirror each other in movement! Try moving in similar ways as your friends, and notice how the energy shifts in your body.
9. Now, I invite you to slowly come back to stillness, bring your hands to your heart, and notice how you feel.
10. Find a word or two to describe how you are feeling right now. When you have your word(s), gently open your eyes if they're closed, and come back into this space.
11. To close this experience, I encourage those of you who feel comfortable to share your word or two words with the community!

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How did it feel to find your flow through music and movement?

How did it feel to interact in flow with your friends?

What did this Find Your Flow practice open up for you?

How do you typically find your flow in your daily life?

How can you find your flow more intentionally moving forward?

➤ — Lead with Love — ➤

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS



### PRIMARY DIFFERENTIATION

Set context by engaging in a conversation about what it means to “find your flow” — connect it to creativity! Play the hip hop song or other fun songs that resonate with young children; you can choose songs that students are already familiar with from class, or invite students to choose songs they love from home to promote cultural relevance.

### SECONDARY DIFFERENTIATION

Some secondary students may be resistant to freely moving their bodies in front of their peers, so set context by sharing the research behind flow and creativity to increase buy-in. Explain that this practice has been shown to enhance well-being, performance, and innovation, and that there is no right way to do it. Name that there are many ways to find our flow — this is just one, so participate in a way that feels comfortable for you!

### ADULT DIFFERENTIATION

This practice promotes creativity, collaboration, and vulnerability, and may at first be uncomfortable for adults who have not been invited to fully express themselves in a similar way in a group setting. Be playful, kind, and inviting in your framing, and let them know that this is a tool for them to tap more fully into their creative brilliance so that they can fulfill their intentions for themselves, and share this practice in their community.

### TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Ensure that you use permission-based, invitational language, and offer and model a wide range of options students can draw on to find their flow in the practice (e.g., you can sit or stand, keep your eyes open or closed, dance, sway, or move your body in whatever way feels good for you). Allow students to participate in whatever way feels best for them.



## BEAR BELLY BREATHING

### B4C Theme

Breathe For Creativity

### SEL\*F Component

Breath Awareness

### SEL Competency

Self Awareness, Self Management

### SEL Purpose

Calms the mind, relaxes the body, increases engagement.

### Materials

A bear hat, puppet, or stuffed animal (optional).



## DESCRIPTION

1. Breathing Bears! Settle into a comfortable seated position on your bear tails.
2. Bring out your bear paws, and let me hear your big bear growls!
3. Now, silently place your bear paws on your big bear bellies. Focus your eyes on one point or gently close them.
4. Inhale, feeling your big bear bellies fill up with breath. Exhale, letting your bear air go.
5. Pay attention to your bear paws, as they move in and out with each bear belly breath.
6. Let's take one final collective bear belly breath together. Inhale, biggest breath of the day; exhale, let it go!
7. Slowly begin to wiggle your bear paws, open your eyes, and smile at your bear friends across the circle. We are ready to learn, breathing bears!



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How did bear belly breathing make you feel?

What was happening inside your body while you were bear belly breathing?

How can bear belly breathing help you in school?

When can you use this breath to help you feel calm and relaxed?



» — Lead with Love — «

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS

### EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ELEMENTARY DIFFERENTIATION

The more enthusiastic and expressive you are during this breathing exercise, the more engaged your students will be! Students love when the teacher wears a bear hat during this practice (You can refer to yourself as “Breathing Bear”). You can also model this activity using a stuffed bear or puppet! The bear hat, puppet or stuffed animal will serve as a reminder for students that it is time to breathe!

### UPPER ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL DIFFERENTIATION

This can be a fun community builder for students; it can help build community, break the ice, and help students realize that there is a wide variety of breathing techniques out there! If students find the bear aspect of the practice to be too childish, simply take it out and guide them through a basic “belly breathing” practice.

### STAFF AND COMMUNITY DIFFERENTIATION

This practice can serve as a fun, engaging, and light-hearted energizer for colleagues, staff, and community members. If you facilitate this practice with a sense of playfulness and high energy, you will inspire adult learners to join you in the fun!

### TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Closing the eyes can be particularly triggering for those who have experienced trauma. To ensure all students feel safe during this breathing technique, give them the option to either find a point in front of them to focus their gaze or close their eyes.





## WEATHER REPORT

### B4C Theme

Breathe For Creativity

### SEL\*f Component

Settle In

### SEL Competency

Self-Awareness, Social Awareness

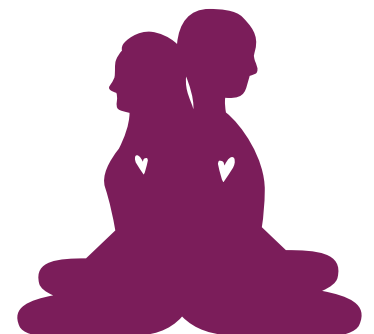
### SEL Purpose

Enhances emotional awareness and vocabulary, builds community.



## DESCRIPTION

1. I invite you to settle into a comfortable seated position.
2. Place one hand on your heart and the other on your belly. You can focus your eyes on a point in front of you, or gently close them.
3. Let's take 3 collective breaths to settle in together. Inhale; exhale. Breathe in; breathe out. Inhale, biggest breath of the day; exhale, let it out with a sigh.
4. Now, let's take a moment to check in on how we are feeling by doing an internal weather report! As you continue to breathe, I invite you to think about the type of weather you are feeling inside your mind and body right now (e.g., sunny and hot, gloomy but warm, cloudy).
5. Once you have finished taking your internal weather report, gently open your eyes if they're closed, and share a smile with a friend across the circle.
6. Now, let's take turns sharing our internal weather report with everyone in our community so that we can welcome in all the types of weather present here today!



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



What is your internal weather report?

How is your internal weather report now different from earlier today? Yesterday?

What might we want to do when we are sunny inside? Gloomy? Stormy?

How can we support ourselves when our internal weather report is gloomy or stormy?

How can we support each other when our internal weather reports are gloomy or stormy?

➤ — Lead with Love — ➤

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS

### PRIMARY DIFFERENTIATION

Engage in a conversation with students about the different types of weather they've experienced, and introduce new types of weather they haven't yet experienced. Display visuals of the various weather conditions to help students build connections to their own feelings. To increase engagement, you can add in movement by inviting students to act out their internal weather report using mindful movements.

### SECONDARY DIFFERENTIATION

Encourage students to use descriptive language to identify and share their internal weather report. Invite students to elaborate on their weather reports by asking follow up questions in response to their shares (e.g. What kind of snowstorm are you experiencing? A light fluffy snow, a strong blizzard?)

### ADULT DIFFERENTIATION

You can lead this practice at the beginning of staff meetings or group discussions, or at the close of an experience to get a pulse

of the room. Encourage your community members to not only acknowledge, but also share their internal weather report to build community. Also, invite them to consider how they might integrate this practice into their life and teaching.

### TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE

Normalize all types of internal weather reports. Ensure that students know that all weather reports are welcomed and accepted in this community. In the midst of stressful or traumatic experiences, our feelings can feel permanent; remind students that our internal weather reports are always changing, just like the weather outside — how we feel in one moment will be different than how we feel in another.

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

This is a great way for English Language Learners to develop and practice new vocabulary related to weather and emotions. Label pictures of various weather conditions and facial expressions to help students enhance their literacy skills.





## PROBLEM? NO PROBLEM!



**B4C Theme**

Breathe For Creativity

**SEL\*f Component**

Focus

**SEL Competency**

Self-Awareness, Self Management, Responsible Decision Making

**SEL Purpose**

Expands perspective, inspires innovative action

## DESCRIPTION

1. To settle in, I invite you to find a comfortable seated or standing position, and do a few shoulder rolls or neck rolls to release any tension you may be carrying.
2. Bring your hands to a place on your body that allows you to tap most fully into your creative energy. Breathe into this place with a full, cleansing inhale, then exhale, letting out an audible sigh. You can soften your gaze or close your eyes, whatever feels most comfortable to you.
3. As you continue to breathe, take this precious moment to (re)connect to your intention for yourself and your well-being. What is it that you truly want for yourself? What does it look like, sound like, and feel like, for you to thrive in this community?
4. From this place of clarity and inspiration, I invite you to bring to mind any internal or external obstacles in the way of you fulfilling your intention for yourself. Internal obstacles typically come in the form of limiting beliefs (e.g., "I'm not good enough" or "I'm not smart enough" or "I don't have time"), and external obstacles are often situations outside of our control (e.g., the pandemic, family health challenges). I encourage you to focus on the obstacles you're facing that are in your control, because this is where the greatest transformation can become possible. In bringing our awareness to the obstacles in our way, we equip ourselves to respond with innovation, creativity, and intentionality.
5. Now that you've acknowledged the obstacles in your way, I invite you to imagine a burning fire inside your belly. Feel the warmth inside, and tap into the creative energy that lives within you.

6. From this place, I invite you to take on the mindset of “Problem? No Problem!” and think outside the box about how you can creatively overcome these obstacles. How can you embrace these obstacles as opportunities? Tap into your creativity! How can you work with these obstacles in a new, more empowering way? How can you actively fulfill your intentions through unstoppable action?
7. From this innovative space, I invite you to take 3 collective breaths of creativity. Take an expansive breath in, and release your breath out. Inhale creativity, exhale doubt. Inhale trust, exhale, let any tension go.
8. To complete our practice together, I invite you to bring your hands to your heart, and notice how you feel.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What is your intention for yourself and your well-being?
- What internal obstacles are in the way of your intentions?
- What external obstacles are in the way of your intentions?
- How can you tap into your creativity to overcome your obstacles?
- How would taking on a “Problem? No Problem!” mindset impact you?



## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS

### PRIMARY DIFFERENTIATION

For younger students, have a conversation about why exploring the obstacles or challenges in our way is so important. Model what it looks like to set an intention and identify an obstacle that might get in the way before transitioning into the guided practice. You can also scaffold the practice by inviting students to consider what their “hopes and dreams” are for themselves, and how they can creatively overcome the challenges in their way.

### SECONDARY DIFFERENTIATION

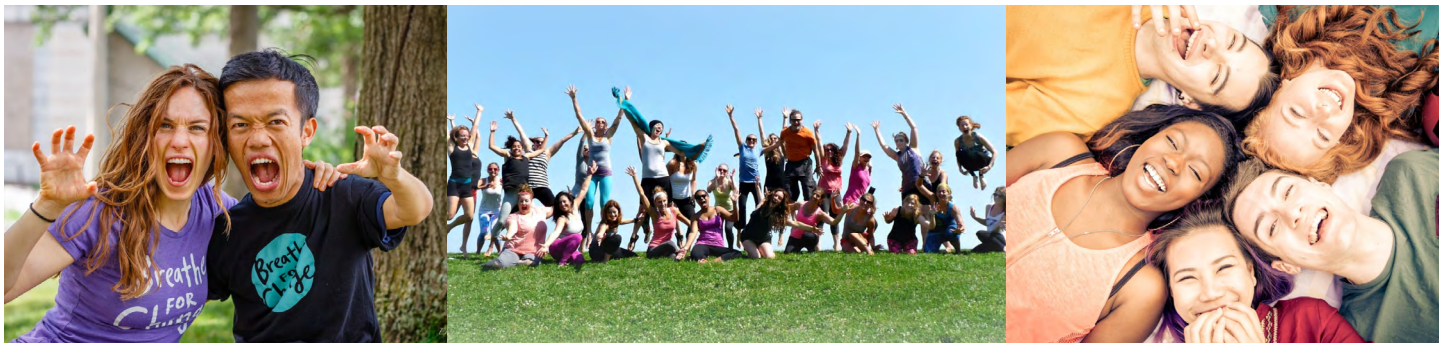
Share the science behind confronting our obstacles to enhance engagement. Explain that when we explore the obstacles in the way of our intentions, we set ourselves up to more effectively respond in moments of challenge and stress. Incorporate intention setting as a consistent part of your routine; draw on this practice to help students be more proactive about how to embrace challenges on their path.

### ADULT DIFFERENTIATION

Facilitating this practice prior to a partner or small group share like we do in our 200-hour training can be incredibly transformative. Specifically, we recommend guiding this meditation and then facilitating Breathe For Change’s Mindful Sharing Protocol focused on the prompt: “What internal and external obstacles are in the way of you fulfilling your vision for yourself and your well-being?”

### TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Exploring obstacles impacting our lives can be emotional, vulnerable, and challenging, especially for those who have or are experiencing trauma. It’s important to name upfront that the intention is for everyone to stay in their stretch zone (not panic zone) during this practice; invite students to engage with this practice in a way that is supportive for their well-being and growth at this time. If they notice themselves entering into the panic zone, invite them to use their tools to return back to their comfort or stretch zone.



## CREATE YOUR STATE



### B4C Theme

Breathe For Creativity

### SEL\*f Component

Settle In, Creative Expression

### SEL Competency

Self-Awareness, Self Management

### SEL Purpose

Enhances energy and well-being, promotes positive mindset

## DESCRIPTION

1. Our well-being and ability to thrive in and out of school is deeply connected to our state of being, which includes our state of mind (mental well-being), our state of body (physical well-being), and our state of heart (social-emotional well-being). As learners and leaders, we have the power to actually create — or manifest — a state of being that can support us in showing up as our best selves at any moment!
2. Today, we are going to practice creating our state by choosing and sharing a movement and sound/word(s) that fully expresses who we are as our best selves.
3. (Model what this looks like for you fully self expressed, and then offer a few additional options to ensure accessibility. For example, you can reach both arms up to the sky and scream “yes!” or give yourself a hug and say “I love you!” or flex your arms with a “roarrrr!”)
4. Now that you’ve seen what being in state looks like, sounds like, and feels like for me,
  5. I invite you to think about a movement and sound that represents your best self. Give me a thumbs up when you’ve got your movement and sound ready to go!
  5. It’s time to create our state as a community! In a moment, I’ll say “1, 2, 3, Create Your State” and then invite all of us to get in state by fully expressing ourselves through our movements and sounds! 1, 2, 3, Create Your State!
  6. I love the creativity and energy flowing through this space! Let’s try it again, this time even louder and more fully expressed than last! 1, 2, 3, Create Your State!
  7. Now, I invite you to pause, bring your hands to your heart, connect to your breath, and notice how you feel. Find one or two words that describe how you feel after creating your state.
  8. I’d love to hear how you feel now that we’ve created our state! If you feel called please share your word or two with the community!

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What was it like for you to create your state?
- Why did you choose your movement and sound?
- How did you feel before vs. after you created your state?
- What opened up for you as a result of creating your state?
- When might it be helpful to return back to this practice?



» — Lead with Love — «

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS

### PRIMARY DIFFERENTIATION

This is a great opportunity for young children to build emotional vocabulary. You can talk about what being our “best selves” looks like, sounds like, and feels like to set context for this activity. To scaffold learning, model a few different movements, and then add in the layer of sound. Then, invite students to first choose their movement, then their sound, and finally, practice creating their state with the entire community.

### SECONDARY DIFFERENTIATION

This is a very engaging practice to use to settle students into class, as a brain break or transition, or when the energy is low or stress is high. Prior to the practice, you can invite students to reflect on when they’ve experienced their top mental, physical, and emotional state, and from that foundation, encourage them to choose a movement and sound that reflects this empowering experience.

### ADULT DIFFERENTIATION

As the facilitator, go all out as you model how to create your state to increase engagement! How you show up will deeply impact how the adults around you will show up to this activity. You can lead this practice at the beginning of meetings or group conversations, or when your community seems tired, disengaged, or stressed to inspire connection and bring up the energy. Encourage adults to play full out while they create their state to gain the benefits of increased mind-body connection.

### TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Some students who have experienced trauma may not feel comfortable with the level of loud noise this practice can instigate. Always let students know that the noise levels may get loud, and if you know this may be triggering, invite people to lower their voices, while still maintaining the level of energy and enthusiasm that gets them in touch with their best state!

## 7-STEP CREATIVITY N' ACTION PROCESS

<b>B4C Theme</b>	Breathe For Creativity
<b>SEL*F Component</b>	Creative Expression
<b>SEL Competency</b>	Self-Awareness, Self Management, Relationship Skills, Social Awareness, Responsible Decision Making
<b>SEL Purpose</b>	Promotes resilience, inspires intentional action
<b>Materials</b>	Journal, pen, action plan steps written out



### DESCRIPTION

Today we are going to use a specific 7-Step Creativity N' Action Process to help us translate our visions for ourselves into action. This innovation process is based on the neuroscience of creativity and will help us tap into our creative power to overcome the obstacles in the way of our intentions. This process is fast-paced, so we will be transitioning you through each step quickly. We invite you to practice going with the flow and letting your creativity shine!

Creativity necessitates fun and full self expression, so especially for those of you who like to have everything planned out in detail, we invite you to let go of your need to "think through" everything logically, and for the duration of this process, simply let your subconscious take over!

We encourage you to trust this process. It's proven to work, and has led to profound outcomes for educators and students, so embrace this opportunity to step into your Stretch Zone and go for it!

- Step 1: Identify Your Obstacle** (2 minutes)

For this first step, please grab your journal and pen, and write about an obstacle that is standing in the way of you fulfilling your vision for yourself and your well-being. This obstacle can be internal (e.g., a limiting belief) or external (e.g., a specific situation or disempowering relationship.) Give yourself permission to choose something that is currently impacting you, and for the next 2 minutes, keep your pen moving as best as you can.

**Summarize Your Obstacle (1 minute)**

Now that your 2 minutes are up, we invite you to bottom line your obstacle in 1 clear sentence, beginning with: "The obstacle in the way of me fulfilling my intention is..."

Ready, go! (Set timer for 1 minute)
- Step 2: Let the Creative Ideas Flow!** (5 minutes)

For the next 5 minutes, I invite you to write down as many creative ideas for how you can overcome this obstacle as possible. Think outside the box – the more creative, the better – and write the entire time! During these 5 minutes, we encourage you to let go of the practical mind, and know that there is no "right" answer. If you find yourself stuck, no worries! Try moving your body to stimulate new thoughts, and simply move onto the next creative idea. (Demo an example of steps 1 and 2 related to a personal obstacle if you have time)

Alright, your 5 minutes start now. Let the creativity flow! (Set timer for 5 minutes)

### 3. **Step 3: Synthesize Your Ideas**

(2-3 minutes)

I invite you to now look back at the entire list of creative ideas you wrote down. Star the 3 most creative, out-of-the-box ideas, and circle the 3 ideas that seem totally unrealistic but if they could magically happen would be amazing. (Set timer for 2-3 minutes)

### 4. **Step 4: Share in Partners**

(2-4 minutes each)

Our minds are built to use communication to organize information, so now we're going to create space for you to share your ideas with a partner. Each partner will have X minutes to share. First, bottom line your obstacle, and then share the ideas you starred and circled. Specifically talk about why you selected these ideas to deepen your connection to them. I invite you to find a partner you have not yet had the opportunity to connect with personally (or find another way to pair people up). Once you have your partner, decide who will speak first. (set timer for 2-4 minutes, depending on how much time you have, then facilitate the switch)

### 5. **Step 5: Create An Action Plan**

(5-8 minutes)

Now it's time to create your action plan. Your action plan will consist of the following 5 parts (write these out for students to see):

- Title: A fun, personal, creative title!
- Description: 1-3 sentence summary of your plan
- Action Steps: 3 tangible action steps you plan to take to overcome your obstacle
- Mindset: The mindset you commit to taking on as you take these actions
- Accountability: The support you need to stay accountable

### 6. **Step 6: Share Your Action Plan** (2-3 minutes each)

The intention of Step 6 is to use our communication skills to help us further synthesize and work out the details of our action plan. Through sharing our raw ideas, we get the benefit of our partner's insight to help refine and validate our plan. Each of you will have X minutes to share. First person, ready begin! (set timer for 2-3 minutes each, and facilitate the switch)

### 7. **Step 7: Make A Commitment**

(1-2 minutes)

We now invite you to take the next minute to look back at your actions, and consider: What are you 100% ready and excited to commit to?! Make any edits, additions, or changes needed to feel fully committed to taking these actions! (set timer for 1-2 minutes)

#### **Declare Your Commitment** (1-2 minutes)

Now that you're clear on your commitment, it's time to declare it to your partner! Each of you will get 1 minute to powerfully declare what you're committing to in order to bring your vision to life! (set timer for 1 minute, facilitate switch, and celebrate during transitions)

### 8. **Whole Group Celebration** (1-3 minutes)

I'd love to open up space for whoever feels called to courageously share your commitments – or appreciations – with the whole community.





## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What opened up for you as a result of this process?

What was it like for you to think outside the box?

What actions will you take to support you in fulfilling your vision for yourself?

What support do you need to stay accountable to these actions?

How do you hope to approach obstacles in your way moving forward?



» — Lead with Love — «

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS



### PRIMARY DIFFERENTIATION

Scaffold this process with young children by reconnecting to the visions they set for themselves, and acknowledging that obstacles and challenges can get in our way — and we have the power to overcome them. Then, invite students to choose an example of a challenge that's relevant to their lives in the classroom, and go through the process as a community before facilitating it individually. To ensure age appropriateness, cut the time of each section, or break up the entire activity into multiple activities, and encourage drawing or speaking if writing is not yet accessible.

### SECONDARY DIFFERENTIATION

To set context, encourage students to reflect on a time when they've overcome a major obstacle in their life, and what opened up for them as a result. Connecting students to their own strength and resilience can help them recognize the power of this process.

### ADULT DIFFERENTIATION

It's important to reconnect your community to their big personal vision and purpose before starting this process. You can guide participants through a meditation that first reconnects them to their intentions for themselves and their well-being, and then invites them to consider how they can tap into their creativity to overcome the obstacles in their way. (See SEL\*f Strategy: Problem? No Problem!)

### TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

This is a fast-paced process with clear structures and timing. In order to facilitate this in a trauma-informed way, let students know up front that this is intentionally designed to be fast paced and timed, and give them permission to participate in a way that supports their learning and well-being.



## MY SUPERPOWER



**B4C Theme**

Breathe For Creativity

**SEL\*F Component**

Focus

**SEL Competency**

Self-Awareness, Self Management

**SEL Purpose**

Builds confidence, cultivates inner strength and self-love

## DESCRIPTION

1. Each and everyone of us have incredible strengths, gifts, and talents — which we like to call our superpowers! It is so important that we acknowledge these superpowers, and create opportunities for us to tap into these superpowers in our daily lives!
2. To strengthen our connection to our own superpowers, I invite you to find your power pose. You can stand up tall, and place your hands on your hips, or bring your arms out to the side or above head, whatever allows you to tap most fully into your inner strength.
3. From this place of strength, connect to your breath. As you inhale, honor the amazing gifts that you bring into our world, and release anything that's not serving you as you exhale.
4. As you continue to breathe, bring your hands over your heart, and acknowledge your greatest strengths. What makes you,
- YOU? What are your unique gifts? These are your superpowers! How do you contribute your superpowers to the world? As you bring awareness to your superpowers, acknowledge yourself! You are amazing. Our world needs the gifts you have to share!
5. From this place of self love, I invite you to consider: How can you tap even more fully into your superpowers moving forward? What actions can you take now to share your gifts, strengths, and talents even more fully with your community and the world?
6. Breathe these intentions into your heart; exhale, release. Inhale, honoring your gifts; exhale, offering your gifts to the world. Biggest breath of the day; out with an audible sigh.
7. Now let's take some space to share our superpowers with each other so we can best support one another in tapping into our strengths!

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



What are your greatest superpowers?

What do you love and appreciate about yourself?

How does it feel to honor your strengths?

How do you already bring your superpowers to your life and our community?

How would you like to more fully breathe and share your superpowers?

» — Lead with Love — «

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS

### PRIMARY DIFFERENTIATION

To support young children in connecting to their strengths and gifts, you can ask questions like, “What makes you special?” or “What do you love about yourself?” Share your own superpowers as an example, and ask students to share examples of their superpowers to help all students better access their own strengths and gifts.

### SECONDARY DIFFERENTIATION

This is a great practice to use to help students build confidence in themselves, especially before a high-stakes exam or experience. Helping students tap into their strengths can shift students’ mindsets about themselves and what’s possible; when students acknowledge the gifts they do have vs. focus on what they lack, their well-being and performance can transform for the better.



### ADULT DIFFERENTIATION

Discuss the importance of strengths-based vs. deficit-based thinking, and introduce this practice as an opportunity to practice taking on a strengths-based approach in relation to ourselves. Facilitate this practice to build confidence and community during meetings, discussions, or community events. After guiding this meditation, facilitate opportunities for people to share their strengths with each other.

### TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Many people, especially those who have experienced trauma, can feel quite uncomfortable, vulnerable, and challenged appreciating and honoring their own strengths and gifts. Be kind, compassionate, and permissions-based as you guide people through this healing practice. Normalize that, as givers, giving to ourselves in this way may go against our natural tendencies — but we deserve it!



## SOUND CIRCUIT



### B4C Theme

Breathe For Creativity

### SEL\*f Component

Community Connection, Creative Expression

### SEL Competency

Relationship Skills, Social Awareness

### SEL Purpose

Builds community, promotes creativity and collaboration

## DESCRIPTION

1. I invite you to stand up, and form a circle with our community.
2. We are going to play a fun game called the Sound Circuit to help us tap into our creative energy. Here is how this will work:
3. Everyone will pick a sound to pass around the circle (e.g., clap, snap, slide, etc.)
4. When the timer starts, we will pass our sounds around the entire circle as fast as we can to the right, one sound at a time. We will stop the timer once all of our sounds have made it around the circle to see how quickly we completed the Sound Circuit.
5. I will model how this works first, and then the person to my right can continue the Sound Circuit until all of us have shared our sound.
6. Here we go! (Set a timer, and do a time check when the final Sound Circuit round is complete.)
7. Let's do one more Sound Circuit as a community to see if we can beat our record!
8. (Optional) To add another layer, I will start with a sound, and keep making this sound as the person next to me adds a new sound to the beat. We will continue to add new sounds as the beat travels through the circle.



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS



What inspired you to choose your sound?

How did you feel during the Sound Circuit? Why?

In what ways did this game spark your creativity?

What aspect of our collaboration are you most proud of?

» — Lead with Love — «

## PEDAGOGICAL POINTERS

### PRIMARY DIFFERENTIATION

For younger students, model a few different types of sounds (claps, stomps, snaps, noises, etc.). Encourage students to practice these different types of sounds with you. Then create the space for students to share any additional sound ideas with the community to ensure everyone has sounds to choose from. Finally, encourage students to pick their own, and practice how to “pass the sound” from person to person. Finally, invite whoever feels excited to start the Sound Circuit.

### SECONDARY DIFFERENTIATION

Share the why behind this practice to enhance engagement. Explain that our ability to work together to pass the sound increases our focus and collaboration skills — and promotes creative thinking. Invite students to get creative by thinking of new sounds they can make with their bodies each time, and coming up with an awesome beat as a community.

### ADULT DIFFERENTIATION

This is a great community building practice for groups of adults. It requires people to

work together as a team, and tap into their creativity. You can use this as an icebreaker, brain break, or community building strategy during meetings, professional development sessions, workshops, or other events. Encourage participants to share this practice with their students!

### TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Use invitational language to ensure everyone can participate in the Sound Circuit in a way that feels comfortable to them (e.g., “I invite you to think of a sound...”). You can also give participants permission to “pass” if they don’t feel comfortable initiating a sound of their own.

### EQUITABLE TEACHING

If you don’t have time for everyone to share a sound, you can ensure equity by giving some students the opportunity to share their sound the first time, and then welcoming in new leaders to share their sound each time you come back to this activity. You can use equity sticks, or find another way to track who has and hasn’t shared a sound to promote inclusion.