

A person with a red backpack is walking across a suspension bridge that spans a deep, lush green forest. The bridge is made of metal cables and a wooden plank. The person is seen from behind, holding onto the bridge's railing. The forest is dense with various shades of green trees. In the background, misty mountains are visible under a soft, hazy sky. The overall mood is peaceful and adventurous.

# Mindfulness: In & Out of the Classroom

Jessica McFarland





Self  
Awareness



# Self-Awareness & Self-Management Tools

# SELF AWARENESS

- Identifying emotions
- Accurate self-perception
- Recognizing strengths
- Self-confidence
- Self-efficacy



# SELF-MANAGEMENT

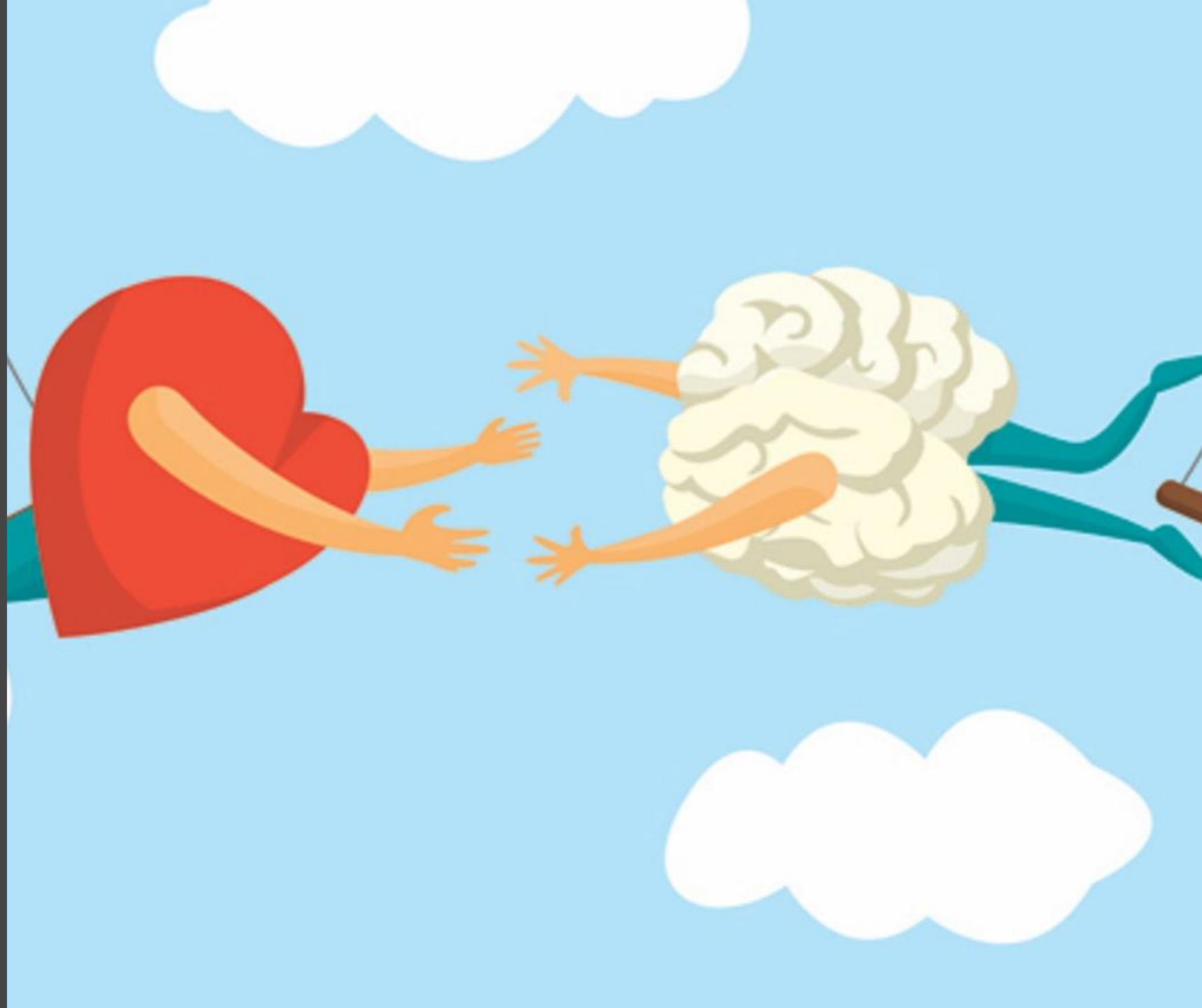
- Impulse control
- Stress management
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
- Goal setting
- Organizational skills





## PAIR & SHARE

What activities or lessons do you currently use that help foster Self-awareness & Self-Management?



“ANYTHING THAT’S HUMAN IS MENTIONABLE,  
AND ANYTHING THAT IS MENTIONABLE CAN BE  
MORE MANAGEABLE. WHEN WE CAN TALK  
ABOUT OUR FEELINGS, THEY BECOME LESS  
OVERWHELMING, LESS UPSETTING, AND LESS  
SCARY. THE PEOPLE WE TRUST WITH THAT  
IMPORTANT TALK CAN HELP US KNOW THAT WE  
ARE NOT ALONE.”

— FRED ROGERS

# What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens.

Mindfulness also involves acceptance, meaning that we pay attention to our thoughts and feelings without judging them—without believing, for instance, that there's a “right” or “wrong” way to think or feel in a given moment.

**Mindfulness** helps to create space and replace **impulsive reactions** with **thoughtful responses**.

*Without  
Mindfulness*



*With  
Mindfulness*





# From the Source: Teens talk about benefits of Mindfulness

“Release” by Julie Bayer Salzman  
(Wavecrest Films)

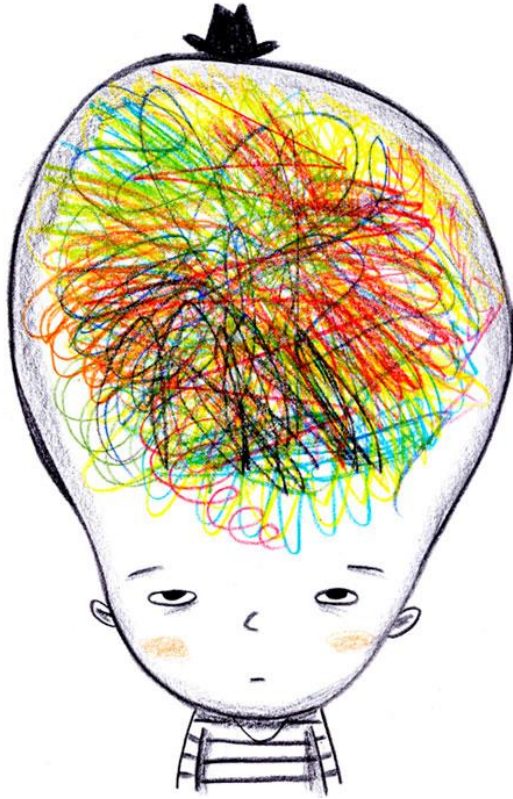




## WHY IS THIS SO IMPORTANT?

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- Suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death in children ages 10 – 24
- 157,000 students were treated for self inflicted injury last year
- 320 schools: 49.5% of students (13 -17) affected by at least 1 class of mental health disorder (depression, anxiety, depression, eating)
- Schools are the number one provider/support of mental health services for students



# GROUNDING IN NEUROSCIENCE

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- **Spinal Cord** (Wrist): collection of cells/neurons
- **Brainstem** (Open Palm): reptilian brain
- **Limbic area** (Thumb): mammalian brain (amygdala) Creates emotion.
- **Cortex** (Fingers): Largest part of the brain (shaped by experiences, think, reflect, manage emotions)
- **Prefrontal cortex**: (Fingernails) reflection and integration. Controls impulses, self awareness, intuition.



TRACE ALL 5 FINGERS



## 5 Finger Breath (Take 5)



# Benefits for Educators

- Demonstrated reduced **stress** and **burnout**
- Reported greater **efficacy** in doing their jobs
- Had more **emotionally supportive** and **better organized classrooms** (based on independent observations)

# PRACTICES FOR YOU

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- Meditation (Calm, Insight Timer, Headspace)
- Walking into school/drive: Set intentions
- Bell of Mindfulness -15min
- Listening to Music- Calm and upbeat
- Connecting to nature (Mindful Walk/Hike)
- Self-Compassion





# Benefits for Students:

- Improved **attention** and **executive function**
- Greater social and emotional skills, including **emotion regulation**, **behavior** in school, and **empathy**
- Enhanced well-being, including **lower test anxiety**, **stress**, **post-traumatic symptoms** and **depression**



# PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS:

- Daily Mindful Sits/Thinkitation – helps to transition, reset and refocus.
  - Mindful Movement: brief activities that energize, refocus and destress.
  - Breathing or Visualizations (5 finger breath)
  - Mindful Sensing/Walks (rainbow, 5 senses, body mechanics)
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- Mindful Jar





Let your breath be  
your anchor.



# MINDFUL SIT/ANCHOR BREATH

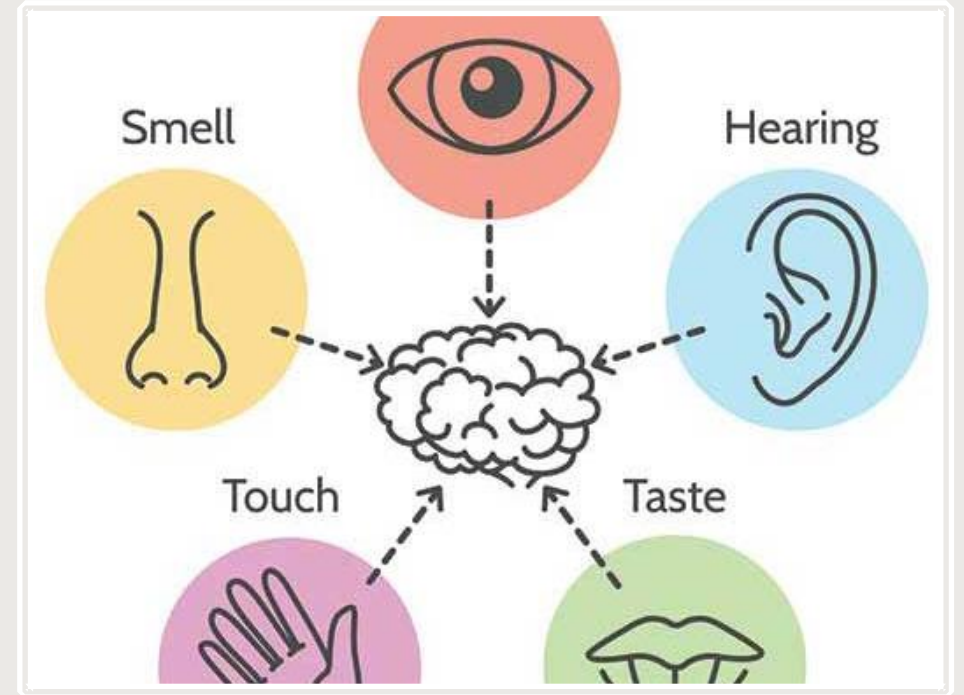
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# Mindful Sensing:

George Prochnik (In Pursuit of Silence) warns that the disappearance of silent spaces is endangering our ability to obtain a reflective, active state of mind.

The peak of brain activity, of thinking, comes in the tiny pauses between sounds.



# Mindful Listening Activities

## The listening Game:

Take Children outside and have them close their eyes to try to really notice all the sounds around them.

Ask them: Could you hear more than usual when your attention was focused?

Did you notice certain sounds getting louder and then softer?

## Listening to Music:

Play a song with different instruments and have them list what they heard.



A full-page background image of a rainstorm. The sky is dark and filled with heavy rain falling diagonally. The ground is wet, reflecting the light, with many small water droplets and splashes visible in the foreground.

# Rainstorm

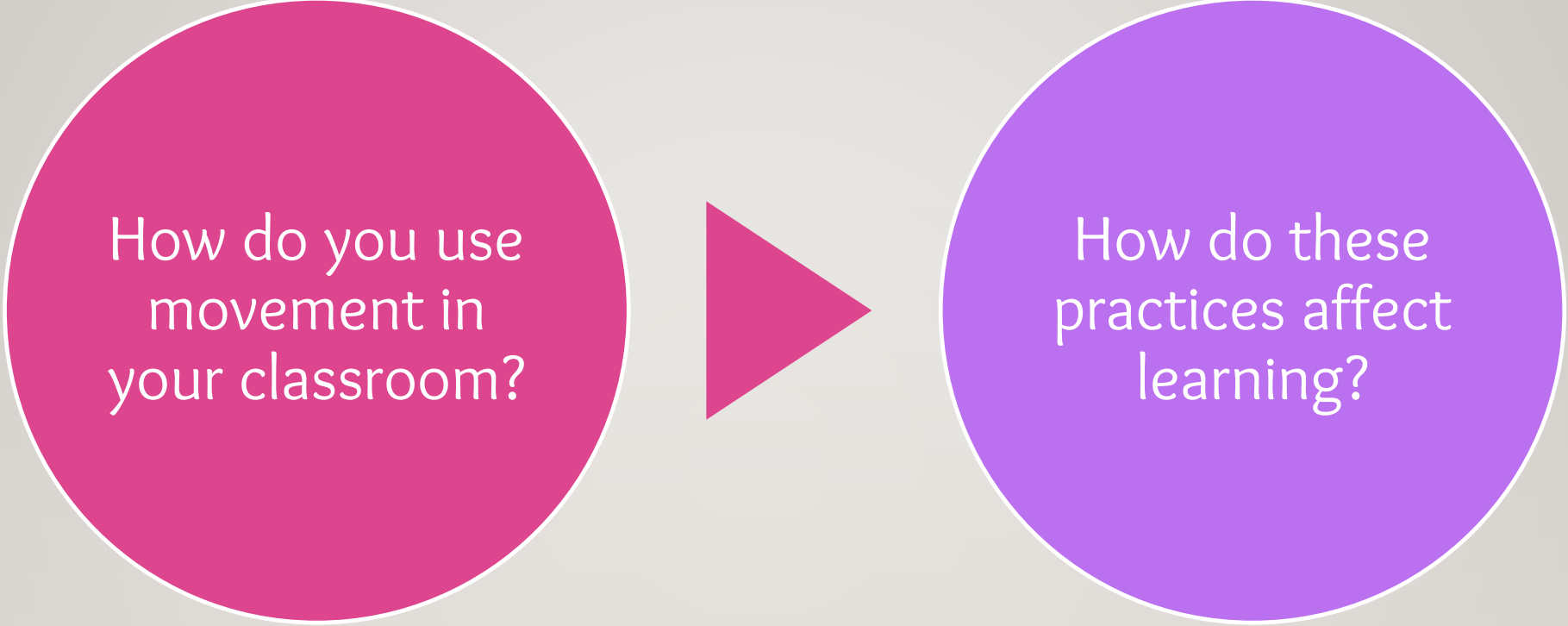


# MINDFUL EATING

What did you notice  
about your piece of  
chocolate?

What flavors, textures,  
sensations were you  
aware of?






How do you use  
movement in  
your classroom?

How do these  
practices affect  
learning?

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PAIR & SHARE





# MINDFUL MOVEMENT

- It pumps up your endorphins. Movement helps bump up the production of your brain's feel-good neurotransmitters, called endorphins. (Dopamine)
- It's meditation in motion. The resulting energy and optimism, can help you remain calm and clear in everything you do.
- It improves your mood. It can increase self-confidence, relax you, and lower the symptoms associated with mild depression and anxiety. Sleep will also naturally improve.





# Mirror Mirror

- Improves focused attention and body awareness.
- Eye contact is key to this exercise.
- When 2 people have direct eye contact, mirror neurons in our brain fire to create empathy for each other.

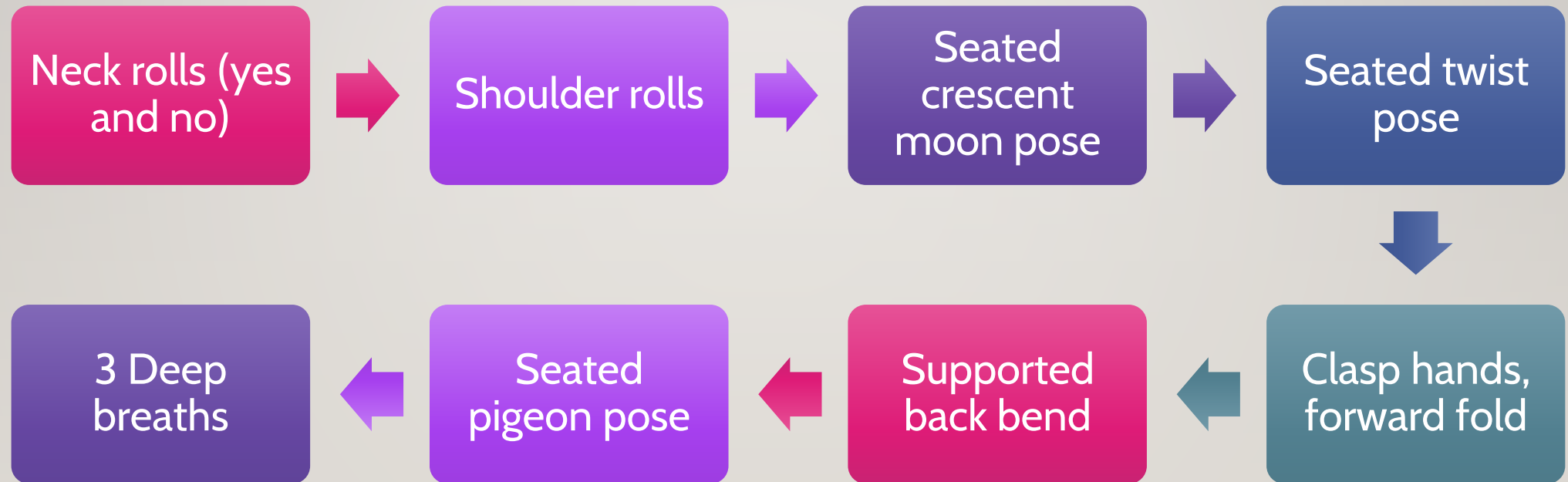
# The Wave

- This creates a flow and challenges participants to pay attention to their neighbor's movements only.
- This is a great activity for processing! It involves focused attention, planning of movement and a lot of impulse control.



# SEATED YOGA SEQUENCE

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# PAIR & SHARE

Name one take away from today  
and how you can incorporate it  
into your learning environment!

The image features two hands, palms facing each other, forming a heart shape. The hands are silhouetted against a soft, warm light from a low sun, creating a lens flare effect. The background is a gradient of light blue and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise over a body of water.

# LOVE & KINDNESS MEDITATION



## APPS & OTHER RESOURCES

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- Calm App (breathing, meditation, sleep stories)
- Mindbody Connect (Local Exercise Classes)
- Down dog (yoga app)
- Start Where You Are Journal (Daily Journal)
- Young Living Essential Oils
- Podcasts: Rich Roll, Melissa Ambrosini, Lewis Howes, Finding Mastery, Dan Harris



# CONTACT INFO

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- [Jessie@thomstecher.com](mailto:Jessie@thomstecher.com)
- Websites/Blog:  
[www.wholesomesprout.com](http://www.wholesomesprout.com)
- Instagram: @wholesomesprout
- Facebook: Wholesome Sprout
- Twitter: @wholesomesprout