

Getting to Know You(reself):
Mindful Practices for the Music Teacher

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Mindfulness is: “the awareness that arises from paying attention on purpose in the present moment nonjudgmentally.”

~ Jon Kabat-Zinn

(creator of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction)

Components of mindfulness:

	Musician	Teacher	
Paying attention on purpose			
Being present			
Curiosity			
Nonjudgmental			

Why practice mindfulness?

- Our minds normally focus on the past or the future. Those are the locations of stress
- Happiness
- Research on teachers who are mindful

A little background of mindfulness:

- Many forms have roots in a religious tradition.
- Some people practice forms of mindfulness without labeling it mindfulness (such as prayer).
- Mindful practice can be secular and still have positive outcomes.
- Mindful-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

Becoming more mindful can support you

AS A MUSICIAN

AS A TEACHER

OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

So how do I practice mindfulness?

Silent Meditation	Movement	Music
	*Ice skating *Yoga *Walking labyrinth	*Listening (rock on stomach example) *Mindfulness approach to making music

Let's Practice

a calming pause	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Listen to room 2) Really feel your breathing 3) Mentally scan your body for physical feelings and emotions 4) Re-focus on your breath 5) Listen to the room 6) Slowly open your eyes
hit your "reset" button	Stop Take a mindful breath Observe Proceed
(re)connect with creativity and musicality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mindfully listen to music (be curious, be present, notice how you respond physically and emotionally) • Imagine a wall of teacher's mailboxes. As you think of musical possibilities, put each in a different mailbox. By noticing many, you leave yourself open to pick one instead of sticking necessarily with the first idea. • Play/sing the same phrase repeatedly. Try not to change it. Each time, mindfully notice something different (e.g. the physical sensation of breathing, your emotional response to your own playing, the tactile sense while performing the phrase)

A Few Analogies Related to Mindfulness

- 1) Empty mind is the blue sky. Even in thoughts (clouds) come, the blue sky is just behind them.



(analogy from Headspace.com)

- 2) Office Hours (set aside time to worry to free up the rest of your time from worry)

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S

(from Arnie Kozak, author of *Wild Chickens and Petty Tyrants: 108 Metaphors for Mindfulness*)

- 3) Train leaving the station (let your thoughts go on without you having to go with them)



(analogy from Diana Winston, Director of Mindfulness Education at UCLA's Mindful Awareness Research Center)

(image from <http://www.drawinghowtodraw.com/>)

Some sources for more information:

<http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/>

(including free, downloadable guided meditations in English and Spanish)

<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/mindfulness/definition>

<http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/>

<http://centerhealthyminds.org/>

<https://www.headspace.com/>

(first 10 meditations free, then choose custom modules)

Consider local classes and centers, make practicing mindfulness part of your routine.