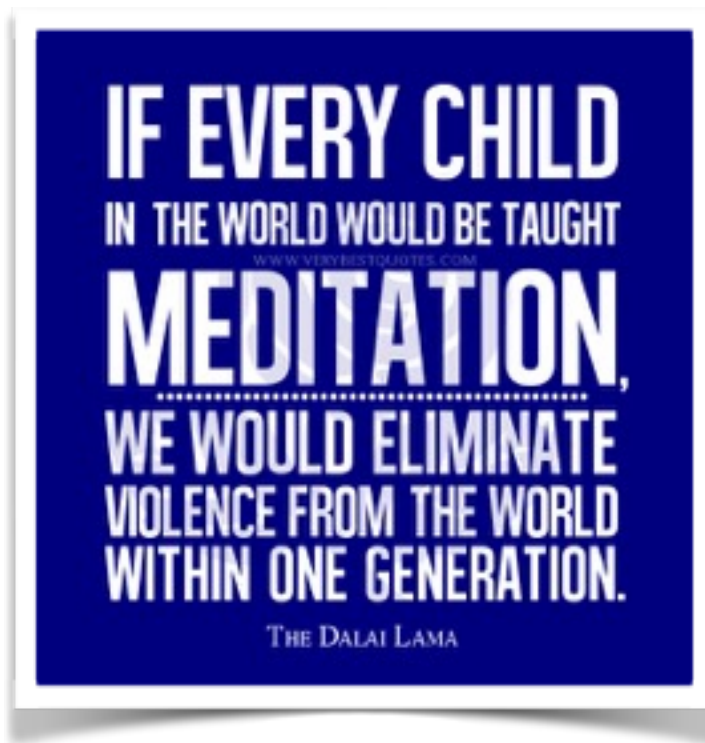


Chicago Lights In2it Cafe  
**Peace Club**  
**Meditation Class**  
Teacher's Guide



# Meditation for Children Teacher's Guide

In2it Cafe  
Chicago Lights  
Fourth Presbyterian Church

## Foreword

This handbook was developed for the Chicago Lights In2It Cafe for a class on mindfulness meditation to help children develop 1) awareness-paying attention to one's experience through the senses and the mind; 2) non-judgment-not labeling things "good" or "bad" but rather observing with a neutral attitude and; 3) stillness in heart and mind which leads to greater awareness of one's self and one's environment.

Science tells us that mindfulness develops attention, emotional and cognitive understanding, and bodily awareness and coordination, as well as interpersonal awareness and skills. The practice of mindfulness meditation diminishes stress, anxiety, and hostility, and enhances our total well-being, peace, confidence, and joy. Research of school children who were taught mindfulness shows that children were less aggressive, less oppositional toward teachers, and more attentive in class.



The ideas for some of the lessons contained here are from a book by Thich Nhat Hanh: [Planting Seeds with Music and Songs: Practicing Mindfulness with Children](#). Though these teachings are based in the Buddhist tradition this manual and the class offered at the Chicago Lights In2it Cafe have no religious basis nor are there any religious references in the materials.

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## Suggested 8-Week Lesson Plan

### **Week One**

See the Teacher's Guide: First Night

### **Week Two**

The Bell Lesson and Meditation - 10 minutes

Breathing Lesson and Meditation - 10 minutes

### **Week Three**

Peace Flags Activity and Meditation - 20 minutes

### **Week Four**

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The Three Secret Sayings Lesson and Activity - 20 minutes

### **Week Seven**

Relaxation Meditation - 20 minutes

### **Week Eight**

Write Your Own - 15 minutes

**NOTE:** There are 2 additional meditations: "Guided Meditation", "and "The Five-Finger Meditation".

# Teachers Guide

Prepare Arrive at 5:00 pm and set up room. All class materials are stored in a bin in the library closet. This handbook has a collection of activities as well as meditations. **Each teacher picks his/her own meditation and activity for their teaching night.**

Elements of Every Class The class lesson is usually 25 minutes long. Some classes will be shorter based on bus arrival times. The lessons in this handbook have the approximate time required posted in the “Suggested Lesson Plan” on the previous page. Every class begins and ends with: The Bell, Breath In, Breathe Out, The Bell.

Lessons, Meditations and Activities The lessons, meditations and activities are designed specifically with the Chicago Lights In2it Cafe time schedule in mind. There are two workbooks, “My Meditation Book” for children 1-6 grades and “Meditation Book” for grades 6-12. Each child receives a book, a bell and a pair of socks at the end of the 8-week session. Some teachers use the “My Meditation Book” as a workbook in the class. If you use the meditation handbooks in class, have the children write their names on the books, collect and store them for the next week’s class. Then, give them to the children to take home at the end of the 8-week session.

Minimize distractions A mental audit of what may cause a distraction, for example a noisy fan, is best done by the teacher prior to the class period.

Minimal Interruptions Position one of the teachers near the door and point to him/her announcing she is near the door so if a child needs to leave the room he or she should go over to her and she will go with them. If a child is restless, disruptive or coughing, do not stop during the class to attend to these issues. Whoever is positioned at the door gently removes the child to the hallway.

Keeping Silent Explain to the children that meditation time is a ‘gift’ of silence to themselves and others and that we don't talk or giggle then. Some children may not understand the need for silence. Some may be afraid of silence.

Keeping Still Some students (children and adults) find stillness very difficult. It may be best when starting out to invite students who might be experiencing this type of difficulty to simply put their heads down and close their eyes and rest. Once a routine is established these students usually start to feel less awkward and begin to engage with the process. Closing their eyes during meditation time helps. Suggest that they softly close their eyes as children tend to squeeze their eyes shut.

Music Each teacher may bring music on their own music player to play during the time the children enter the Peace Club. Playing music during meditation time may be too distracting for children.

Peace Club The children themselves have named this group the Peace Club. We are the In2it Cafe Peace Club and one of the things we teach is meditation.

## In2it Cafe Peace Club Meditation Class

# Teachers Guide: First Night

Time is usually abbreviated on the first night as the children get organized in their classes.

Introduce meditation using the cover photos, Kobe Bryant quote and “Your Meditation Book” page. If time permits, try these suggestions.

**Bell:** Hold up the Bell and ask: “Who knows what this is? Does anyone have one of these at home? What do we do when we hear the sound of the bell? Imagine the sound of this bell is the voice of someone who loves you very much and wants you to be happy and peaceful. When you hear the bell, stop what you are doing and saying, and just breathe. In and out.”

“Now let’s get on our feet and wander around the room. When you hear the bell, stop, be still and silent and breathe in and out three times.”

This is like playing “statue”. Have the children do this 3-4 times.

**Breathing:** “Breathing can help you to calm down when you get upset or nervous. It can also help you focus better in class and when taking a test or before a game. Any time we are aware of our breathing, whatever we experience in the moment improves—if we are happy, we become happier, and if we are sad, breathing helps us to be happy, to calm down, and to understand things.”

**End** this class and every class this way:

Ring the bell.

“Breathe in.”

“Breathe out”

Hold silence for a moment.

Ring the bell.

Say “Peace”.

**Teachers: Write notes, observations, suggestions here.**

**The following pages are duplicates from the children's "My Meditation Book" with a few suggestions added for the Teachers.**

**My Meditation Book is for grades 1-6.  
Meditation Book is for grades 6-12 and adults. They each have meditation exercises suitable for those age groups.**

# Your Meditation Book


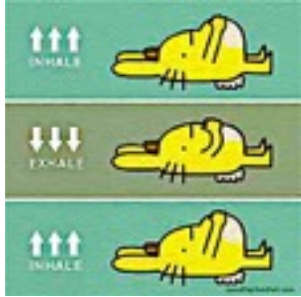


**Teacher:** This can be a class lesson or something children can do on their own when they take their "My Meditation Book" home at the end of the 8-week session.

## Meditations

This is your Meditation Book. Write your name on the front cover. Practice these meditations by yourself or with your friends and family in a quiet place. Try to teach meditation to others.

## Practice Meditation Everyday

Here is a list of meditation practices. Do some of these throughout your day. Think of some other meditation practices you can do and write them down at the end of this list.

<p><b>Bell</b></p>	 <p>Whenever you hear a bell, a car horn or a siren, stop. Breathe in. Breathe out.</p>
<p><b>Belly Breathing</b></p>	<p>Every morning when you get up say to yourself:</p> <p>"I breathe in and my belly blows up like balloon. I breathe out and my belly goes down."</p> 
<p><b>Backpack</b></p>	 <p>Every time you put on your backpack say to yourself:</p> <p>"I lift my backpack up onto my back. I wiggle a little to make it comfortable. I breathe in. I breathe out."</p>
<p><b>Flag</b></p>	<p>Whenever you see a flag, say to yourself, "I breath in peace to myself, I breathe out peace to others."</p> 



## Bell Meditation - 10 minutes

**Teacher:** Have the students sit in a relaxed position. Back straight, not stiff.

Ring bell.

Say the following slowly. Pause after each sentence.

Breathe in.

Breathe out.

Imagine the sound of the bell is the voice of someone who loves you very much and is calling you.

Ring bell.

Close your eyes softly, don't squeeze them shut.

Breathe in.

Breathe out.

Think about the person who loves you and wants you to be happy and peaceful.

Imagine you are inviting that person to sit with you.

As you breathe say to yourself:

“Breathing in, I feel fine. Breathing out, I feel happy.”

(Repeat breathing exercise slowly 3-4 times).

Slowly open your eyes.

Ring bell.



### Practice Meditation

Whenever you hear a bell, a car horn or a siren, **stop.**

Breathe in. Breathe out.



# Breathing Meditation - 10 minutes

**Teacher:** Have the students sit in a relaxed position. Back straight but not stiff. Hands on top of legs.

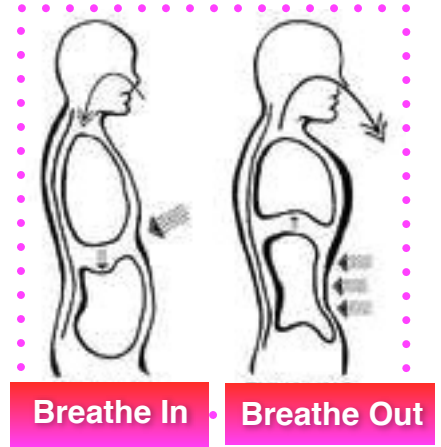
Ring bell. Read the following slowly.

Breathe in. Breathe out.

Hold a finger like a mustache right under your nose. Breathe out. Feel the breath on your finger. Now breathe in. Feel the breath in your nose.

Put your hands on your belly.  
Pretend your belly is a balloon.  
When you breathe in you are blowing up the balloon.  
When you breathe out your belly goes back to normal.

Close your eyes softly. Don't squeeze them shut.  
Breathe in.  
Breathe out.  
Practice breathing in silence for a few moments.  
Slowly open your eyes.  
Ring the bell.



---

**Write down some different times during your day  
when you can stop and breathe in and breathe out**

<i>Before I eat my lunch</i>	



**Peace Flag  
Meditation - 20  
minutes**

**Activity**

Cut out the flag on the next page. Write your name on one side. Write P E A C E on the other side. Decorate with stickers if you like.

You can make more flags with names of your family and friends and string them all together.

**Meditation**

**Sit in a relaxed position.  
Hold your back straight, not stiff.**

**Ring the bell.**

**Breathe in.**

**Breathe out.**

**Imagine your peace flag is blowing in the wind.**

**Imagine the wind blows your name off the flag into the air all around the room, all around your home, and all around the outside world.**

**Close your eyes softly.  
Whisper to yourself:**

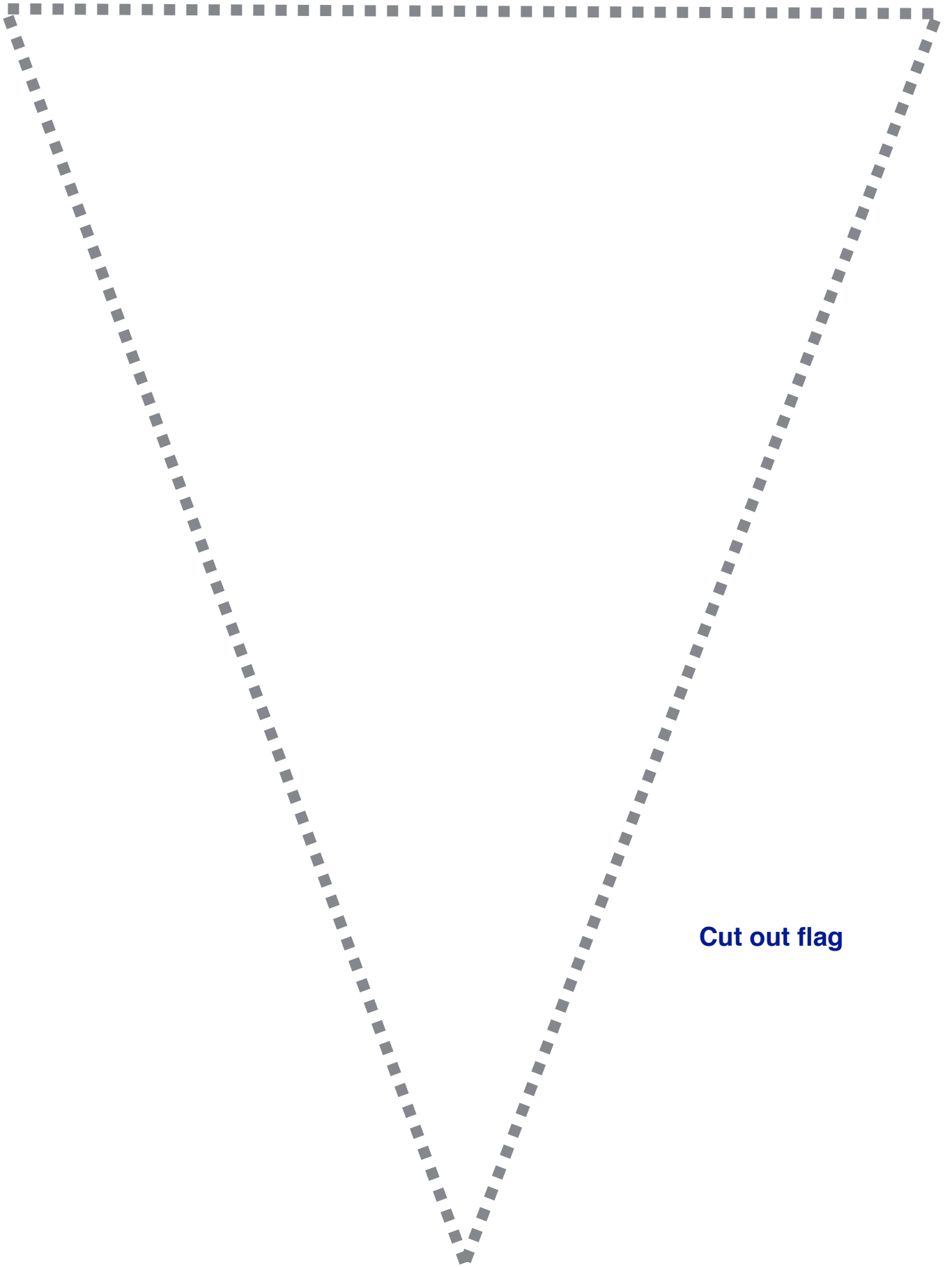
**"I spread peace to the world. The world is more peaceful if I am more peaceful."**

**Slowly open your eyes.**

**Ring the bell.**

**Teacher:** Cut out 1 flag for each child before class from materials in the bin. Allow each child the same number of stickers to decorate flag. Children may take their flags home.

Do the Meditation after the activity. Read S L O W L Y. Pause between sentences.



**Cut out flag**



## Labyrinth Meditation - 20 minutes

Go to a quiet place. Remove your shoes. Sit in a relaxed position. Place a bell on the floor in front of you. Hold your back straight, not stiff.

Ring the bell.

Breathe in.

Breathe out.

This is a labyrinth. You take one winding path to the center and take one winding path back out.

Put the large labyrinth in front of you. Place one finger on the entrance to the labyrinth. Slowly follow the path with your finger to the center. Pause at the center. Slowly walk your finger back out.

Breathe in.

Breathe out.

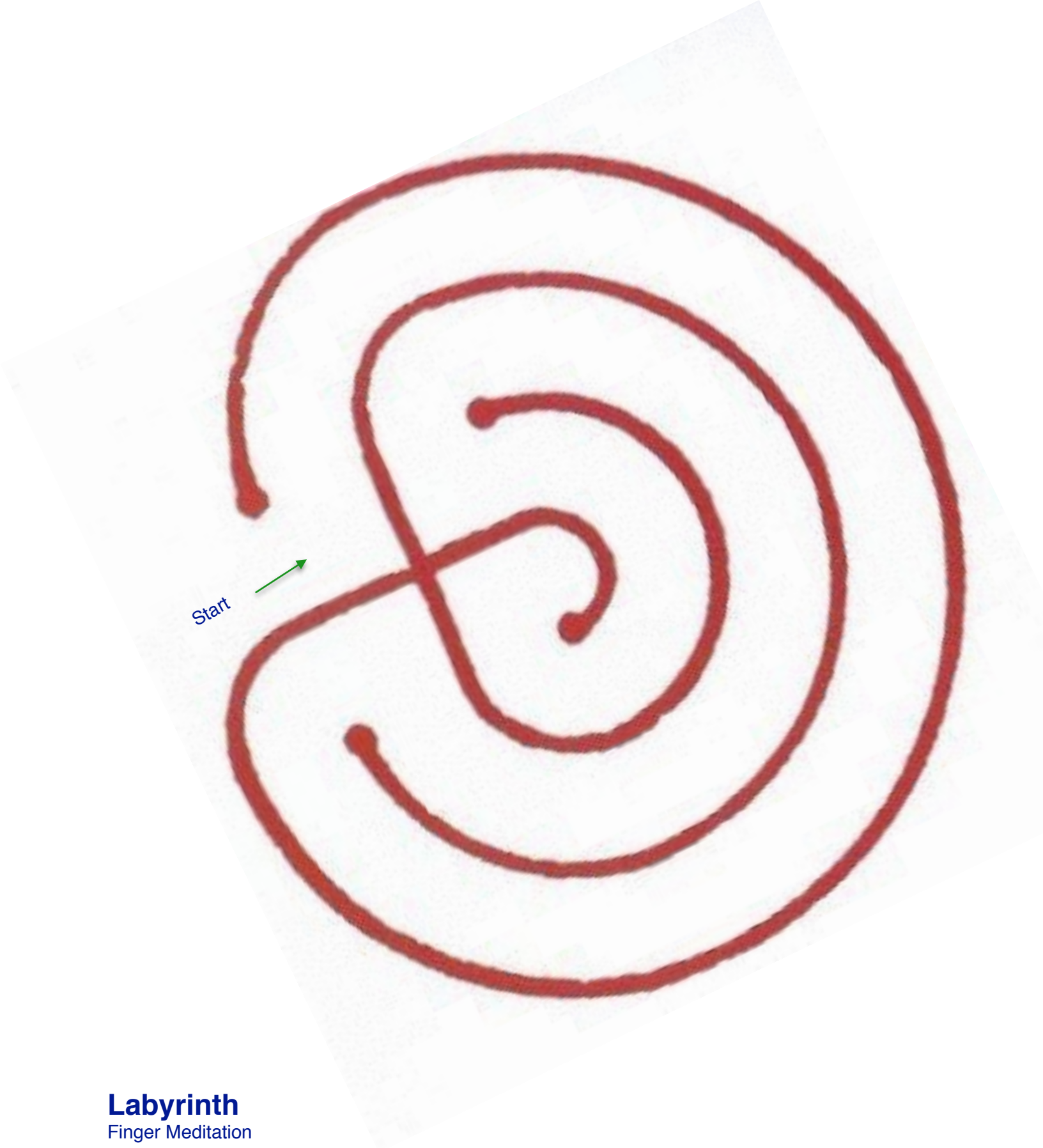
Ring the bell.

**Teacher:** Use the large labyrinth on the next page in class.



Write down some places where you can go and Imagine you are walking in a labyrinth.

<i>sitting on the bus</i>	



**Labyrinth**  
Finger Meditation



## Write Your Own - 20 minutes

This is a meditation on Silence. Ring the bell. Breathe in. Breathe out. Have the students sit with their backs straight not stiff, eyes closed softly. First, say all the words *s l o w l y*. Then ask the students to write their own meditations in the lines provided. Invite each child to recite their own meditation as the rest hold stillness and silence. Lastly, time permitting, have them write or draw their ideas about beauty, goodness and peace. Ring Bell. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*I silence my **eyes**.*

*I close them to the faults of others.*

*I open them to beauty, goodness and peace.*

Close them to: \_\_\_\_\_

Open them to: \_\_\_\_\_

*I silence my **ears**.*

*I close them to gossip and ugly, nasty words.*

*I open them to beauty, goodness and peace.*

Close them to: \_\_\_\_\_

Open them to: \_\_\_\_\_

*I silence my **tongue**.*

*I close it to mean and loud words.*

*I open it to beauty, goodness and truth.*

Close it to: \_\_\_\_\_

Open it to: \_\_\_\_\_

*I silence my **mind***

*I close it to suspicion of others and destructive plans.*

*I open it to beauty, goodness and peace.*

Close it to: \_\_\_\_\_

Open it to: \_\_\_\_\_

*I silence my **heart**.*

*I close it to selfishness, hate and violence.*

*I open it to beauty, goodness and peace.*

Close it to: \_\_\_\_\_

Open it to: \_\_\_\_\_

*I silence my **breath**.*

*I close it to shallow, short bursts.*

*I open it to breathing deeply and slowly into my belly.*

Close it to: \_\_\_\_\_

Open it to: \_\_\_\_\_

*I silence my whole body and mind.*

*I open my whole body and mind to beauty, goodness and peace.*

BEAUTY



GOODNESS



PEACE



**Use this space to draw your own pictures of beauty, goodness and peace.**



## Guided Meditation - 15 minutes

### Teacher:

Say the words  
in italics  
S L O W L Y.  
Pause after  
each sentence.

Note: this is  
worded  
differently in  
Meditation  
Book grades

## Let's Go on an Adventure!

Sit in a comfortable position. Hold your back straight, not stiff. Roll your shoulders slowly forward and then slowly back. Lower your head slowly toward your left shoulder, then lower your head slowly toward your right shoulder.

Notice how your breath flows in and out. Don't change your breathing in any way, simply notice how your body breathes.

### Ring Bell

Close your eyes softly, don't squeeze them shut. Sit quietly. Listen to my voice and imagine you are saying these words to yourself.

*I'm going on an adventure, not out the front door but through an inner doorway in my mind to the beach on a warm summer day. I don't feel hot or cold. Just right. I see myself standing by the water. Small waves wash against the sand over and over. I breathe in and out with the waves.*

*In and out.*

*In and out.*

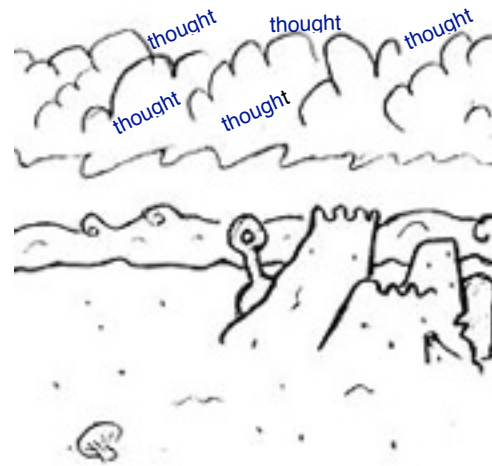
*(Pause)*

*My body feels limp like a fish in the water. I am relaxed and comfortable. Safe and happy. My thoughts are light and airy. I let my thoughts pass by on the clouds in the sky. I breathe in and out with the clouds.*

*In and out.*

*In and out.*

*(Pause)*



### Ring Bell.

Now, slowly stretch out your arms and legs. Open your eyes.

Do you feel new energy, all set and ready to go?

## Lovingkindness Meditation - 20 minutes

**Teacher:** Ring Bell. Have students sit with backs straight not stiff. Softly closes eyes. Read through all the words S L O W L Y. Then read the 4 promises on the worksheets on the next 2 pages. Have the students write a name or draw a picture or pictures on each page. When you are finished, have everyone hold stillness and silence while one of the children read the Lovingkindness Meditation again. NOTE: For the Meditation Book grades 6-12, this meditation is worded differently.

**Sit in a relaxed position.  
Hold your back straight, not stiff.**

**Ring the bell.  
Breathe in.  
Breathe out.**

### Lovingkindness Meditation

**Say this quietly to  
yourself:**

**May I be happy.**

**May my family be  
happy.**

**May my friends be  
happy.**

**May the birds and  
animals be happy.**

**May the world be  
happy.**

**Breathe in.  
Breathe out.  
Be silent for a  
few minutes.  
Open your  
eyes slowly.  
Ring the bell.**



I promise to develop understanding and compassion in order to live peacefully with people, animals and the earth.



1.

1. "I promise to develop understanding and compassion to live more peacefully with this person." Draw or write the name of a person.

2. "I promise to develop understanding and compassion to live more peacefully with this animal." Draw or write the name of an animal



I promise to develop understanding and compassion in order to live peacefully with people, animals and the earth.

3. "I promise to develop understanding and compassion to live more peacefully with this plant, flower or tree." Draw or write the name of a plant or flower.



4. "I promise to develop understanding and compassion to live more peacefully with this part of the earth." Draw a park, lake, sky, or mountains.



## The Stone Meditation - 10 minutes

Place a flat stone on your right side. Sit with your legs straight or crossed. Hold your back straight, not stiff.

Ring bell.

Breathe In.

Breathe out.

Quiet your eyes. Do not shut them. Pick up the stone in your right hand. Place it in your left palm. Put your right hand flat over your left palm covering the stone. Now close your eyes softly. Do not squeeze them. Say this to yourself:

“This is a flower. Breathing in, I see myself as a flower. Breathing out, I feel fresh and smell good. “

“This is a mountain. Breathing in, I see myself as a mountain. Breathing out, I feel solid and strong.

“This is a lake. Breathing in, I see myself as water. Breathing out I feel clear and calm.”

“This is space. Breathing in I see myself as space. Breathing out I feel free and light.”

Silence for a minute.

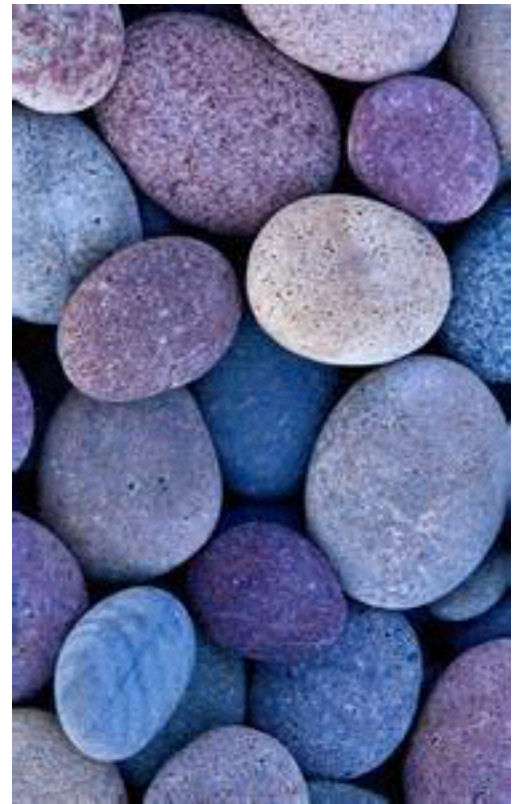
Place the stone on the floor on your left side.

Breathe in.

Breathe out.

Ring the bell.

**Teacher:** Use the stones in the basket in the bin. Children are **not** to take stones home with them. Read S L O W L Y. Pause between sentences.



# The Three Secret Sayings Meditation - 10 minutes

Sit in a relaxed position.  
Hold your back straight, not stiff.

Ring the bell.  
Breathe in.  
Breathe out.

Whisper the three secret sayings silently to yourself about one special person in your life.

"I love you."

"I know you love me."

"Peace."

Breathe in.  
Breathe out.  
Ring the bell.

**Teacher:** Do not clip coupons in class. Have children be silent and listen to your voice as you say the 3 Secret Sayings. Repeat the meditation a number of times instructing the children each time to think of a different person.

I Know  
You Love  
Me

Peace

Practice Kindness: Cut out the secret sayings coupons and give them to special people in your life.

I Love  
You

I know  
you love  
me

Peace

I Love  
You

I know  
you love  
me

Peace



## Five Finger Meditation - 10 minutes

**Teacher:** Read all the words S L O W L Y.

Put your index finger of one hand on the wrist of the other hand, just below the thumb.

Breathing in, slide the finger up the outside of the thumb.

Breathing out, slide the finger down the other side of the thumb.

Breathing in, slide the finger up the first finger;

Breathing out, slide the finger down the other side of the first finger.

Breathing in, slide the finger up the second finger

Breathing out, slide the finger down the other side of the second finger.

Breathing in, slide the finger up the third finger.

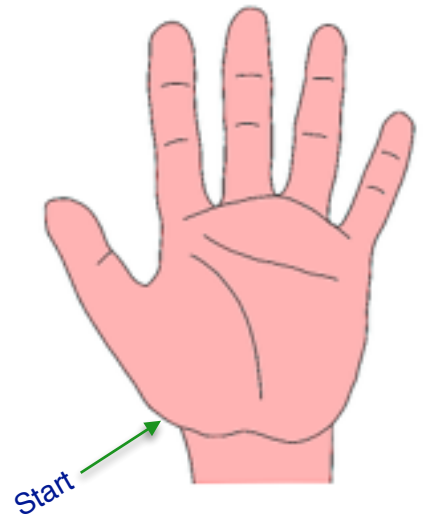
Breathing out, slide the finger down the other side of the third finger.

Breathing in, slide the finger up the fourth finger.

Breathing out, slide the finger down the other side of the fourth finger.

Change hands and repeat.

Do this whenever you feel nervous or excited or sad, before a test at school, before playing a game against someone, before a music or dance performance, when you walk to school, when you get in trouble, when someone dies.



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Write down some other times you might use the five-finger meditation.

<i>when older kids bully me</i>	
<i>before a test at school</i>	
<i>when I feel scared or nervous</i>	

## Body Relaxation - 20 minutes

### Teacher:

Have everyone lie down on the floor on their backs with their arms at their sides and their palms turned up toward the ceiling.

Read S L O W L Y. Pause between paragraphs.

NOTE: This meditation is worded differently in My Meditation Book for grades 6-12.

Start here



### Ring the bell.

Breathe in. Breathe out.

This is a relaxation meditation. The meditation ends when you hear the bell. Close your eyes softly. Listen to my voice and imagine it is you talking to yourself.

As I breathe in and out, I become aware of my whole body lying down. I feel all the areas of my body that are touching the floor: my heels, the backs of my legs, my bottom, my back, the backs of my hands and arms, the back of my head. I breathe in. I breathe out. I feel myself sink deeper and deeper into the floor.

Breathing in, I feel my two eyes. Breathing out, I smile to my eyes. Breathing in, I let all the many muscles around my eyes relax. Breathing out, I send my two eyes my love and care. My two eyes are a gift! With my eyes, I can see. I can see you and I can see me. I can see birds flying in the bright blue sky. I can see the yellow moon up above. I can read, write, and watch television. I can watch ants build and I can do long division. When I'm sad, I can cry and let the tears flow. My eyes let everything inside of me show. Breathing in, I squeeze my eyes shut. Breathing out, I release them and let them relax. Thank you, eyes, for letting me see; there is so much beauty to see around me.

Breathing in, I'm aware of my two hands. Breathing out, I completely relax all the muscles in my two hands. Breathing in, I feel lucky to have two good hands. Breathing out, I smile to my two hands. Because of my hands I can play in the sand and build a sand castle. With my two hands I can paint, I can draw, I can write. I can build and fix things, or pet an animal. I can ride a bicycle. I can climb a tree and throw a snowball. I can hold hands with my friend, tie my shoelaces; I can help make cookies, hamburgers, or tamales; I can brush my hair. Breathing in, I stretch my hands wide. Breathing out, I relax them. My hands are two very good friends, always ready to help me.

Breathing in, I'm aware of my two feet. Breathing out, I smile to my feet. I wiggle my toes, all ten of them. How nice to have two feet! With my two feet, I can walk and run, play sports, dance, and ride a bike. My feet love to feel the warm sand when I walk on the beach. When it rains, my feet love to splash in a puddle. In the park or playground, my feet love to run and jump and skip. And when I am tired, my two feet love to rest. Thank you, feet! Breathing in, I stretch my feet and toes. Breathing out, I relax my feet. I feel lucky to have my two feet.



Breathing in, I feel my lungs grow bigger. When I breathe out, I feel my lungs get smaller. Breathing in, I feel so happy to have my lungs. Breathing out, I smile to my lungs with kindness. My lungs help me breathe in and out all day and night, even when I sleep. They bring oxygen into my body and give me the power to speak, to sing, to shout, to whisper, to giggle, and to grumble. When I was just born, the first thing I did was to take a deep in-breath. And ever since then, my lungs have been there for me, every minute of everyday. I breathe the fresh air into my lungs, and breathing out, I let them rest and relax. Thank you lungs for helping me breathe!



Breathing in, I know my heart is beating inside my chest. Breathing out, I enjoy my heart and let it rest. With my in-breath, I send my love to my heart. With my out-breath, I smile to my heart. My heart keeps me alive and it is always there for me, every minute, every day. It never takes a break.. It is an organ that allows me to do everything I do throughout the day. Breathing in, I know that my heart also loves me. Breathing out, I promise to live in a way that will help my heart to be healthy and strong. With each out-breath, I feel my heart relaxing more and more, and I feel each cell in my heart smiling with ease and comfort.

Breathing in, I feel my whole body lying down. Breathing out, I enjoy the feeling of my whole body lying down, very relaxed and calm. I smile to my whole body as I breathe in and send my love and compassion to my whole body as I breathe out. I feel all the cells in my whole body smiling joyfully with me. I feel gratitude for all the cells in my whole body.

Now roll onto one side and sit up. When you are ready, you can open your eyes. Take your time to get up calmly and slowly.

**Ring the bell.**



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