

# Montana Principals Conference

## Breathe For Presence with Beth Schreiber

How to foster resilient  
leadership and create  
healthy schools starting  
from within

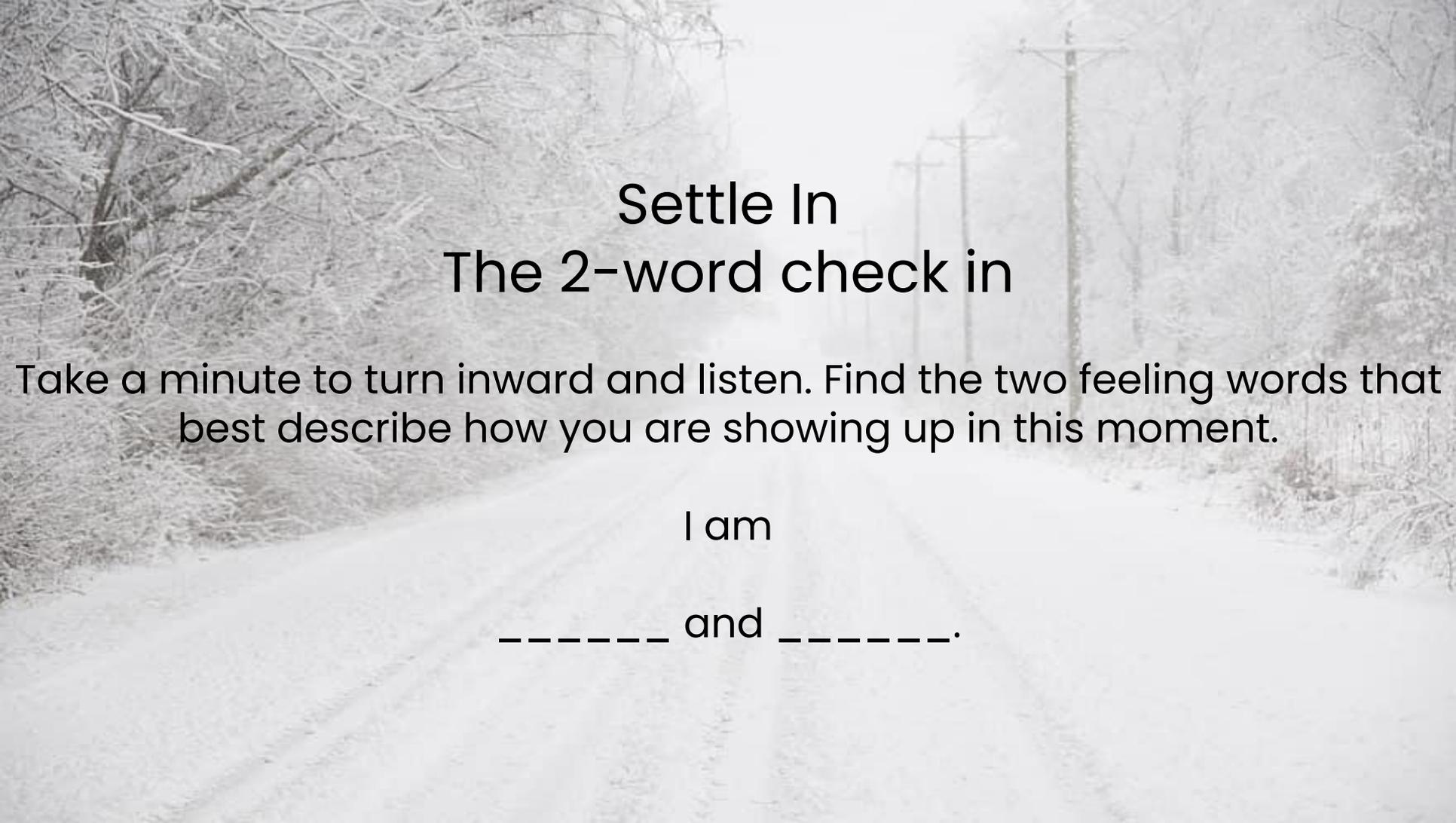




## Our 60 Minutes Together

- Settle In
  - 3 Collective Breaths
  - The 2-Word Check-In
- Who is Breathe for Change?
- A Quick SEL Review
- Staff Stress in Schools
- Staff Outcomes of Breathe for Change Program Implementation in Schools
- Focus on the School Leader
- Breathe For Presence
  - Personally
  - Relationally
  - Organizationally
- Clouds Passing Meditation
- Chair Yoga
- Loving Kindness Meditation



A photograph of a snow-covered road winding through a winter landscape. The road is covered in a layer of snow, with faint tire tracks visible. On the left side, there are bare, snow-laden trees and bushes. On the right side, there are utility poles with power lines stretching into the distance. The overall atmosphere is misty and cold, with a soft, diffused light.

## Settle In The 2-word check in

Take a minute to turn inward and listen. Find the two feeling words that best describe how you are showing up in this moment.

I am

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

# Breathe For Change

2015 - "Changing the world one teacher at a time"

2020 - Shifted to digital offerings educator across the country

2022 - Focus shifts the organizational health of schools, districts, and entire communities AND the individual educator

2023 - Acquired Yoga Ed. and united the two movements into one



# Beth Schreiber M.Ed.

Received Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education at University of Montana

Received Masters Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Montana

Received 200 hour Breathe for Change Yoga Instructor and SEL Facilitator Certificate

\*Beginning 300 hour Breathe for Change program this weekend!



# Social-Emotional Learning (CASEL)

the process through which young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to:

- develop healthy identities
- manage emotions
- achieve personal and collective goals
- feel and show empathy for others
- establish and maintain supportive relationships
- actively contribute to learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.





# Stress in our schools

RAND Corporation & National Education Association Survey (2022)

- Teachers and principals reported worse well-being than other working adults.
- Poor well-being and adverse working conditions were associated with teachers' and principals' intentions to leave their jobs.
- Supportive school environments were linked to better well-being and a decreased likelihood of intentions to leave.
- access to employer-provided mental health supports is linked to lower levels of job-related stress and higher levels of resilience for both principals and teachers.
- About 20 percent of principals and 35 percent of teachers reported that they did not have access to employer-provided mental health supports or did not know whether they had such access.

“For many principals and teachers, available mental health supports were not helpful or convenient or were too limited to address their needs. District leaders should avoid the appearance of treating wellness as a superficial or short-term problem and offer mental health and well-being supports tailored to educators' needs.”

~Sy Doan, coauthor and an associate policy researcher at RAND



# Breathe for Change in our schools

100%

"I have improved my mental, physical, and social-emotional well-being."

98.4%

"I have become more engaged in sharing wellness practices with my community."

99.5%

"I have enhanced my pedagogy/teaching skills."

99.6%

"I feel more motivated and equipped to take care of myself."

100%

"I am better equipped to manage my own stress."

97.9%

"I feel connected to and inspired by the Breathe For Change community."

100%

"I have the tools to design and facilitate SEL and wellness workshops in my community."

95.4%

"I have reconnected to my passion and purpose."

93.7%

"I feel less stressed and burnt out than I did before training."

99.6%

"I am better equipped to help others manage stress."

98.8%

"I feel more confident integrating SEL and wellness into my teaching."





# Why SEL for School Leaders?



Leadership's  
social-emotional  
health impacts ...



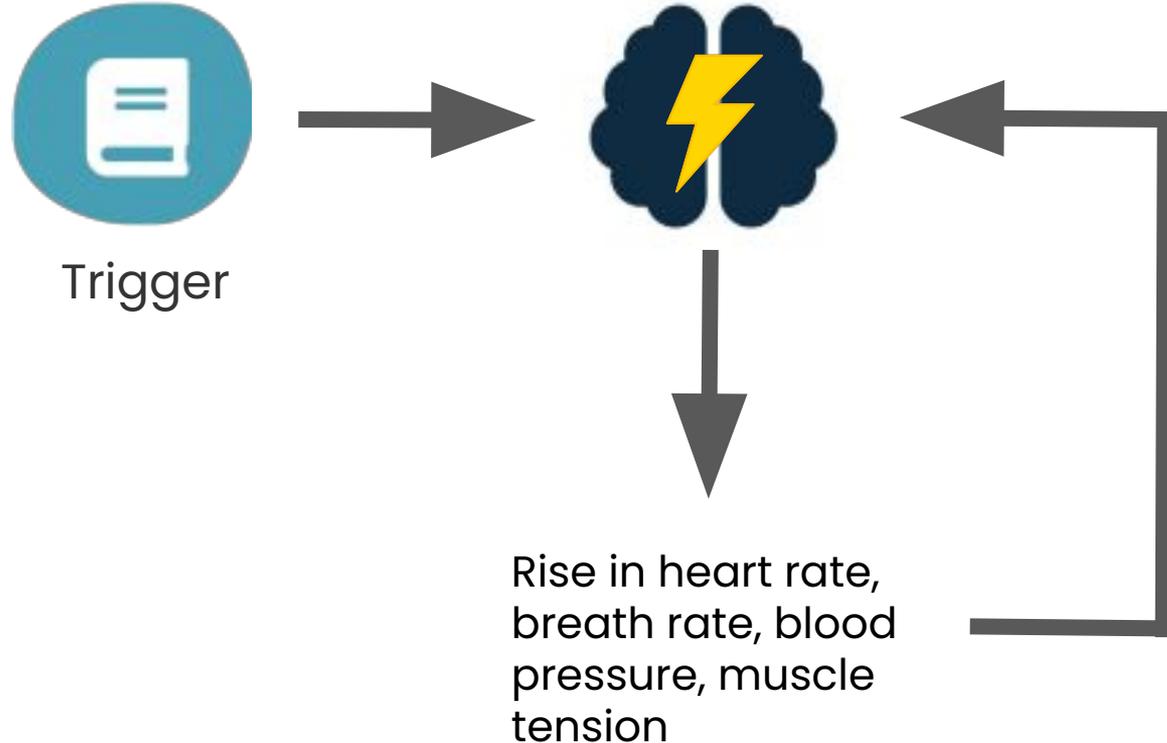
the teachers'  
social-emotional  
health which  
impacts ...



the students'  
Social-emotional  
health which  
impacts academic  
progress &  
behavioral choices.



# The Stress Feedback Loop

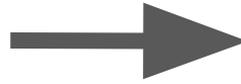




# The Stress Feedback Loop



Trigger



Rise in heart rate,  
breath rate, blood  
pressure, muscle  
tension



**Presence Practices** as a  
Pattern Interrupt to the  
Stress Feedback Loop



# The Impact of a Presence Practice



The Definition of Mindfulness/Presence: the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

Mindfulness Practices can:

- Decrease anxiety and depression
- Increase immune function
- Protect brain from declines due to aging and stress
- Improve mental clarity and focus
- Improve heart-health
- Enhance mental health treatment
- Slow cellular aging
- Improve self-confidence and leadership
- Improve mood
- Improve sleep



\*Madhav Goyal, MD Meta-Analysis 2014

**Begin with what's easy so that you are prepared for when it inevitably gets harder. This looks like regularly practicing while not triggered to become prepared for responding when triggered. Eventually the challenges themselves become the practice.**





# Breathe for Presence Personally

5, 4, 3, 2, 1

## Presence Practice

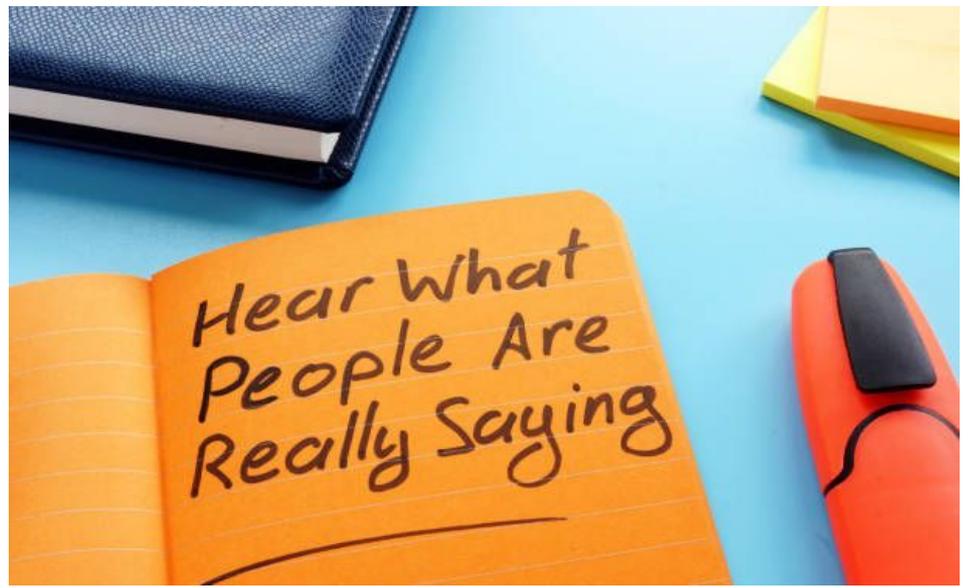
- 5 things you see (color)
- 4 things you can hear
- 3 things you can touch
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste





# Breathe for Presence Relationally

## Mindful Listening



- Find a partner and sit facing one another
- For 1 minute the first partner shares what they have received from this conference while second partner listens mindfully
- For 30 seconds the second partner reflects back in their own words what was shared without judgement and with as much detail as possible
- Switch roles and repeat process



# Breathe for Presence Organizationally

## Non-Violent Communication



Step 1 — Observations: Identify a challenging situation that you'd like to work through with a person you care about.

Step 2 — Feelings: Identify and name your emotions.

Step 3 - Needs: Identify and state your needs and values.

Step 4 - Requests: Make a request — a realistic, doable, appeal!

\*\*\*Website: [www.cnvc.org](http://www.cnvc.org)  
information, worksheets, needs and feelings inventory, etc.



# Breathe for Presence Organizationally

## Non-Violent Communication

Step 1 — Observations:

State the facts of what happened in 1 sentence without judgment or generalizations.

Step 2 — Feelings:

I feel / I felt:

Step 3 - Needs:

Because of my need for / Because I value:

Step 4 - Requests:

Would you be willing to...



# **Cultivating a Presence Practice - Personally - Professionally - Organizationally**

**“As soon as you honor the present moment, all unhappiness and struggle dissolve, and life begins to flow with joy and ease. When you act out the present-moment awareness, whatever you do becomes imbued with a sense of quality, care, and love – even the most simple action.”**

**~Eckhart Tolle**



# Meditation

The Definition of Meditation: Meditation is exploring, not erasing, the present moment as it is. When we meditate, we venture into the workings of our minds: our sensations (air moving in and out of the body or a noise wafting into the room), our emotions (love this, hate that, crave this, loathe that) and thoughts (did I remember to send that email?).



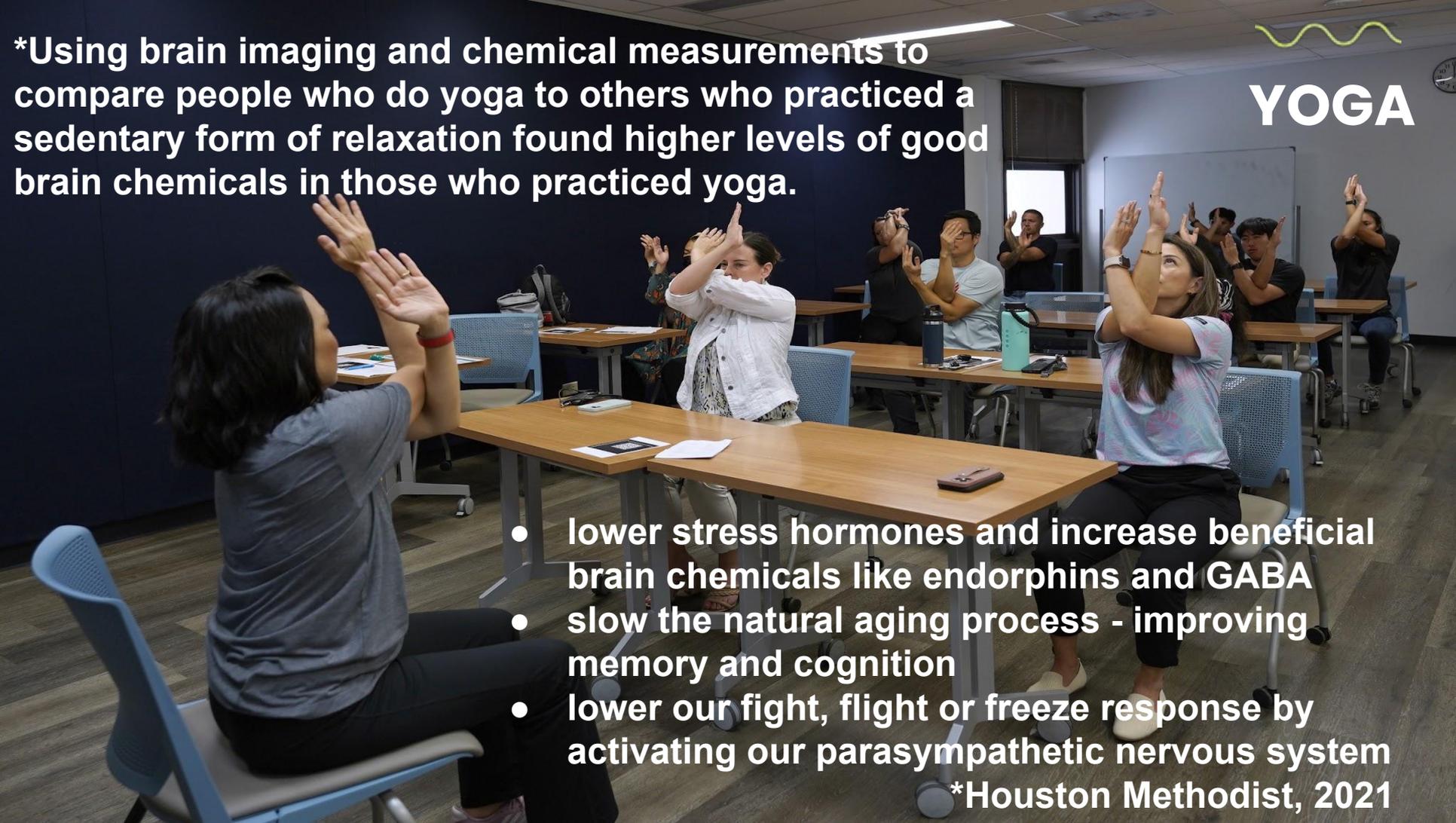


# Clouds Passing Meditation

Mindfulness meditation asks us to suspend judgment of the workings of the mind and unleash our natural curiosity about what is happening in the moment, allowing ourselves to be with each moment with warmth and kindness, to ourselves and to others.



**\*Using brain imaging and chemical measurements to compare people who do yoga to others who practiced a sedentary form of relaxation found higher levels of good brain chemicals in those who practiced yoga.**

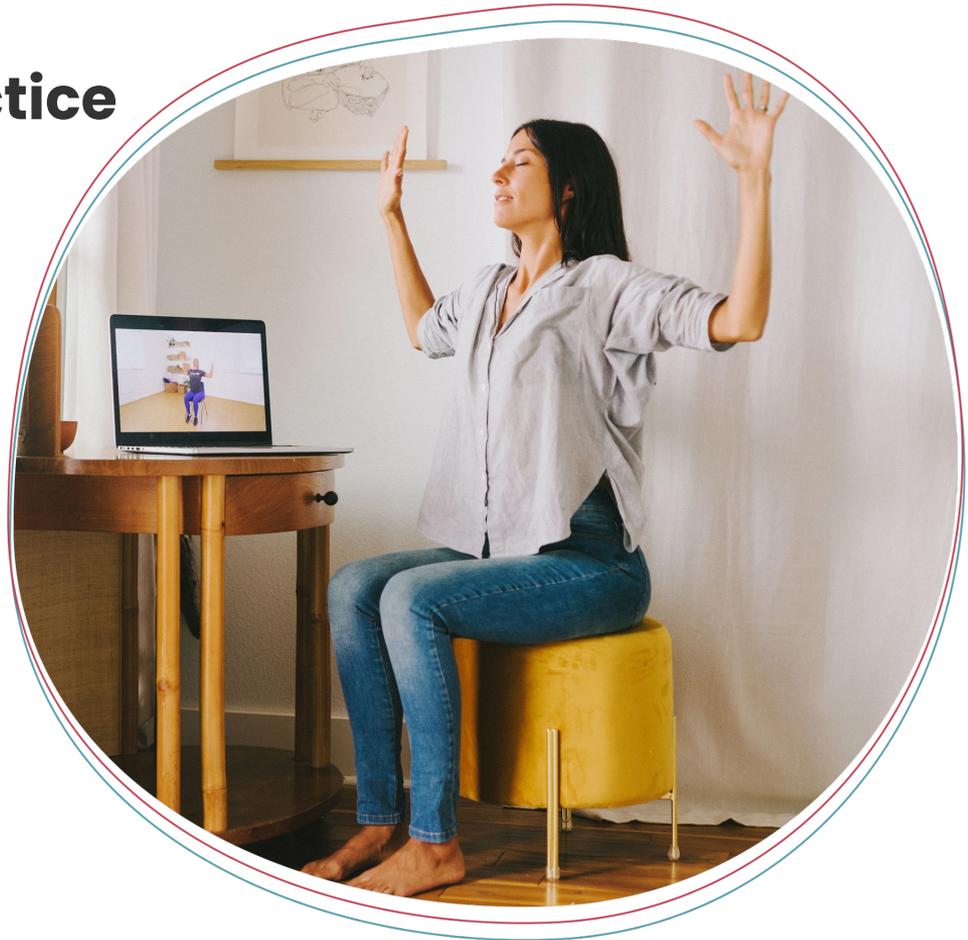
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- **lower stress hormones and increase beneficial brain chemicals like endorphins and GABA**
  - **slow the natural aging process - improving memory and cognition**
  - **lower our fight, flight or freeze response by activating our parasympathetic nervous system**

**\*Houston Methodist, 2021**



## 5-10 Minute Chair Yoga Practice

- Seated Mountain Pose
- Neck Rolls and Stretches
- Seated Twists
- Seated Side Bends
- Seated Cat/Cow
- Eagle Pose
  - both sides
- Seated Pigeon
  - both sides
- Seated Savasana





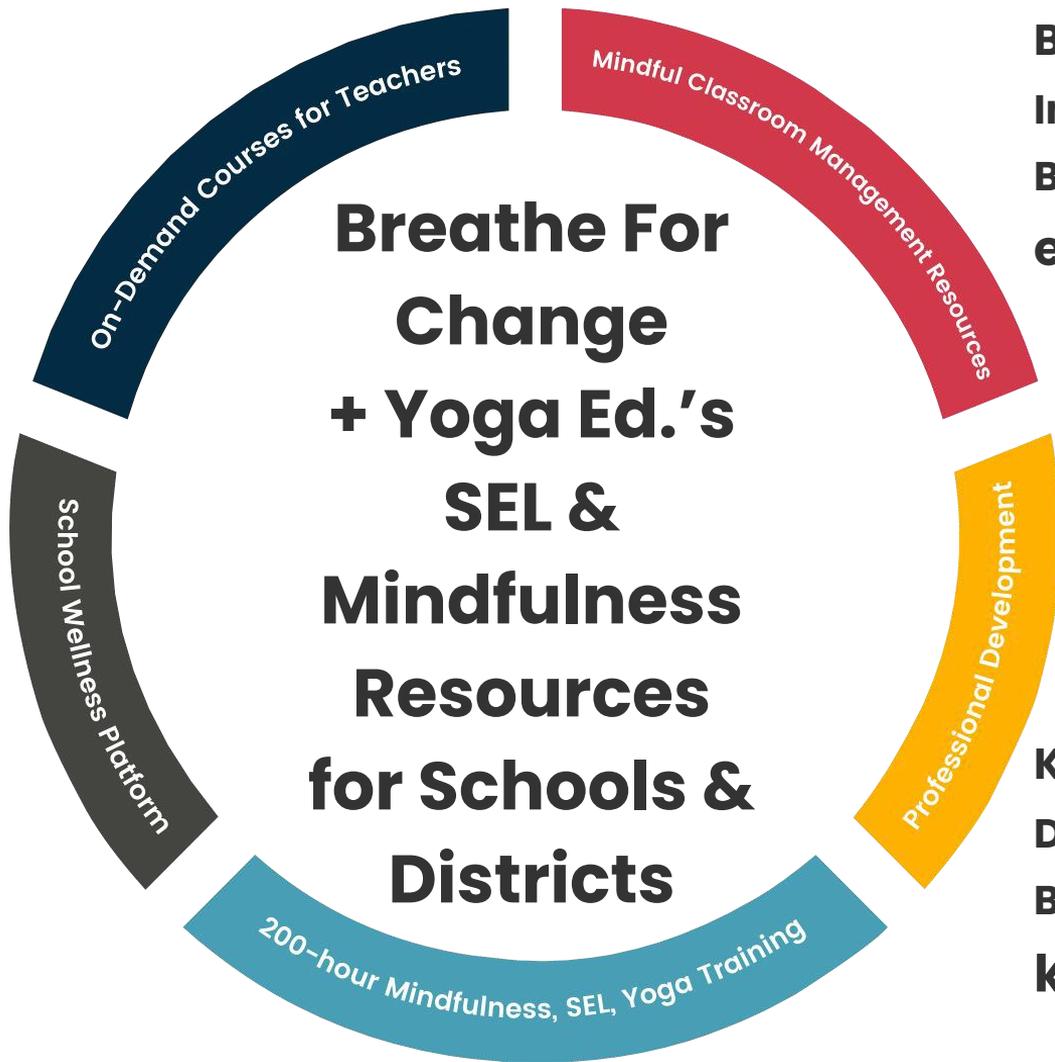
# Loving Kindness Meditation

One at a time, hold each of the following in your mind's eye and send the following wishes.

Loved One, Acquaintance,  
Conflicted Relationship, Self,  
All Sentient Beings

May you be happy  
May you be healthy  
May you be safe  
May you be free





**Beth Schreiber, M.Ed.**  
**Instructor and SEL Facilitator**  
**Breathe For Change**  
**[elizabethkschreiber@gmail.com](mailto:elizabethkschreiber@gmail.com)**

**Kelli Sammis, Ed.D.**  
**Director of School & District Solutions**  
**Breathe For Change**  
**[kelli@breatheforchange.com](mailto:kelli@breatheforchange.com)**