



**Los Angeles County
Office of Education**

Serving Students ■ Supporting Communities ■ Leading Educators

STUDY GUIDE

ALL IN: SAFE AND WELCOMING SCHOOLS

Series 7:

Activities for Processing Mind, Heart, and Soul

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VIDEO 1

ACTIVITIES FOR PROCESSING MIND, HEART, AND SOUL

STANDARDS

The CDE has developed guidance to support adults across the education system to co-create [Transformative Social and Emotional Learning Conditions for Thriving](#).

This includes the [Social and Emotional Learning Guiding Principles - full version \(PDF\)](#); [Social and Emotional Learning Guiding Principles - summary \(PDF\)](#); a [resource library from Education First](#); and a system implementation plan from [California Educators Together](#).

To support Transformative Social and Emotional Learning, through the arts this workshop will focus on Healing-Centered Engagement exercises meant to validate students' individual and collective experiences in pursuit of empowerment.

RESEARCH

What is Healing-Centered Engagement (HCE)?

Healing-Centered Engagement is an asset-based model for arts education aimed at the holistic restoration of an individual's well-being developed by Dr. Shawn Ginwright and Nedra Ginwright through decades of work with Black youth in the Bay Area. It is strengths-based and seeks to promote resilience and healing from traumatic environments and experiences.

HCE acknowledges that for many BIPOC youth, trauma is not just something that occurred, it's ongoing trauma exposure, a toxic environment fueled by systemic racism and inequality. HCE acknowledges that a complex web of systems touches our lives, and the lives of young people even more so. The systems can engender positive, negative or neutral feelings about the world in young people, depending on the quality of their relationships with these systems. Healing-centered engagement invites us to examine our relationships to systems and explore how we can influence young people—and entire communities—to create alternative approaches.

Healing-Centered Arts Engagement:

- Views communities and individuals who experience trauma as agents in their own healing
- Is asset driven and focuses on the wellbeing we want, rather than symptoms we want to suppress
- Supports adult providers with their own healing and well-being
- Is culturally-grounded and views healing as the restoration of identity, especially for people who have experienced having aspects of their identity marginalized and potentially traumatic
- Acknowledges that individual and collective wellbeing is impacted by systems, and our systems suffer from implicit and explicit bias, systemic racism, and other forms of systematic marginalization

The CARMA Approach

The HCE approach developed by Flourish Agenda centers five **CARMA** principles rooted in culture and the arts:

- **Culture:** Developing an awareness of one's own and other's humanity, ethnic history, and racial and other social identities.
- **Agency:** The individual and collective ability to act, create, and change the root causes of personal, social, and community challenges.
- **Relationship:** The capacity to create, sustain, and grow healthy connections with others.
- **Meaning:** The profound discovery of who we are, where we are going, and what purpose we were born to serve.
- **Aspirations:** The exploration of possibilities for our lives and the process of accomplishing goals for personal and collective livelihood.

PRACTICAL & APPLICABLE STRATEGIES

Why the Arts?

- Prompts for creative writing, meditation, and expansion through visual arts allow us to move from a subconscious processing of given circumstances to conscious efforts of validating lived experience, culture, and empowerment.
- While all five of the Social Emotional Learning Competencies are addressed in an arts approach, the competencies in focus for the following might be Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, and Self-Management. Let's do a brief overview of these exercises and see what connections we can make.

Strategy 1 – Breathing Meditation:

Starting with a neutral position, let's sit nice and tall with our feet flat on the ground, hands on our knees, chest out, neck tall, and we are going to imagine a string pulling the top of your head. Let's take a collective breath—in through nose, out through mouth. I invite you to close your eyes and listen to the sounds around you. From this sound, we are going to drop into a bit of storytelling using our senses.

- What is the sound?
- Where is the sound?
- When did it start?
- Why do you think it is here?
- Who might be making the sound?
- By hearing this sound, can you tap into another one of your senses (smell, sight, touch, taste)?

Let's reflect: What were some things in common that we heard? What was different? How did this exercise make you feel? What new experiences did you have? What was easy/challenging about it?

Strategy 2 – I Am Poem:

Invite participants to write five statements on a page, "I AM..., I WONDER..., I HEAR..., I SEE..., I WANT..., I AM..." Invite participants to complete each statement as they interpret it.

Sample to Read Aloud:

- I AM... someone who matters.
- I WONDER... about the unknown.
- I HEAR... the cries of the unheard.
- I SEE... the color in the darkness.
- I WANT... to keep pushing the boundaries.
- I AM... someone who matters.

Strategy 3 – Imagine and Connect:

Let's take one of the sentences in your I Am Poem to reflect.

- What action/objects do you see connected to this statement?
- Who comes to mind when you read this statement?
- Does this statement make you think of any of your previous experiences, or an experience you would like to have?
- Where does it take place?
- When does it take place?
- Why did it happen?
- Again, what senses are evoked when you read this statement?

Strategy 4 – Developing Story:

Let's take a moment to develop this further into a story. What you envisioned is a special gift that we don't want to forget. For 20–30 seconds, I am going to ask you to start writing without stopping, not worrying about spelling or grammar, about one thing that appeared to you in the last exercise and why it is important to you.

Modification – Visual Storytelling:

If it is easier for you to communicate visually rather than in writing, I invite you to do a rough sketch, not worrying about rendering detail, of something that appeared to you in the last exercise.

- What might you include on the page (composition)?
- If there are people in this scene, how might you sketch them? Are there ways to communicate any actions or emotions through the way you sketch people here?
- What colors came to mind in your vision? I invite you to add color to your sketch.
- What mood comes to mind when you see the scene with these colors?

TEACHER REFLECTION GUIDING QUESTIONS

Let's utilize the **CARMA** model to see how your experiences connected through these exercises.

In any of the four prompts provided, where were there opportunities to connect to one's **culture** and identity?

Did any personal or community challenges emerge during one of the exercises? Did any ideas for how to act or react on these challenges come to mind (**agency**)?

When were you asked to think of any **relationships** that you were reminded of or reconnected to through one of the exercises?

What **meaningful** statement did you choose for your story development and why?

Did these prompts open you up to any new possibilities? Let's celebrate your completion of the exercises as completed goals starting from your own presence in the moment and lived experiences. How might this process help with other goals or **aspirations**?

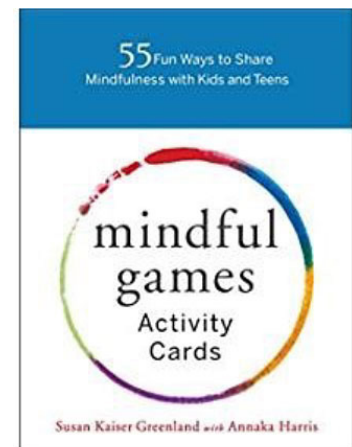
ADDITIONAL TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Mindful Games Activity Cards:

55 Fun Ways to Share Mindfulness with Kids and Teens

A deck of 55 mindfulness games for kids that takes a playful approach to developing attention and focus, and identifying and regulating emotions. They include anchor games that develop concentration; visualization games that encourage kindness and focus; analytical games that cultivate clear thinking; and awareness games that develop all of these qualities and give greater insight into ourselves, others, and relationships. The deck contains 55 5x7 illustrated cards, each devoted to one game or activity.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Healing-Centered Engagement Resources

Read Dr. Shawn Ginwright's seminal article on HCE: ["The Future of Healing: Shifting From Trauma Informed Care to Healing Centered Engagement"](#) (Medium, May 31, 2018).

To reflect on your own practice as well as insights from the fields of arts education, check out a 2021 zine created by VPR Consultants along with the LA County Department of Arts and Culture, [Healing Centered Engagement: Reflections and Insights from the Field](#).

Guided Meditations and the Arts

Try any of the free guided meditations from the [UCLA Mindful Awareness Research Center \(MARC\)](#) and [UCLA's Arts & Healing Resources](#)

General Resources on Transformative Social Emotional Learning

To better understand the role of T-SEL and the arts in schools, the resources listed below are a good starting place.

- [ArtsEdSEL](#), The Center for Arts Education and Social Emotional Learning
- Educational Psychologist, [Transformative Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\): Toward SEL in Service of Educational Equity and Excellence](#), 162184.
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), [Developing and Refining Transformative SEL Towards Equity](#)
- CASEL webinar, [SEL as a Lever for Equity](#)

TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Your Support Pack Includes:



- **The Burning River**
Poems of Pandemic & Protest
- **Daily Poetry Journal**
35 fun-to-read poems with activities for each poem.
- **12-Color Box of Pencils**
300 pencils
- **Sketch Paper Pad**
9" x 12"