

“Music Teacher as Therapist”

www.positiveinnerchange.com
sally@positiveinnerchange.com

A Dozen Plus One: Easy and Educational Ways to Help Your Students when they come to you with family problems, sadness, anxiety, depression and overwhelm

1. Begin each lesson by becoming centered and calm yourself. **Breathe**
2. **Listen** to your students...pay attention to mood shifts. No judgment or advice...
3. Be present with **Compassion**
4. **Focus on Positive**
5. **Be Aware** of students becoming emotionally overwhelmed.
6. **Be Open**, letting go of what may be bothering you...this is the student's time
7. Begin the lesson with **deep breathing** and **centering** with your students.
8. Create warm ups that **validate** what the student is feeling...slowly shift emotional state to calm and fluid. Try different rhythms, articulation, tempo, dynamics, etc. **Meet your student where they are and bring them into a positive learning environment.**
9. **Frustration or Anger: Drum** the rhythm of a piece of music that expresses your student's feelings. Experiment with fast or slow.
10. **Sadness or Overwhelm:** Choose a soothing song and have your students **hum** the music
11. **Hyperactive:** Have the student move (run, jump, twist, stretch) in place to the beat, gradually slowing down. Toss them a ball or scarf to play with when you want to talk to them.
12. Have your student **improvise** a song that reflects where they are emotionally.
13. **Play Your Day.** Improvise a song that reflects everything that happened today.

Red Flags

Talk to the parents when you see these red flags

- Marked personality and/or attitude change
- You are unable to calm a student down
- Your student is constantly preoccupied, worried, anxious and intense
- Your student is unable to concentrate
- You notice new habits of thumb sucking, hair pulling or rocking of the body.
- The student is talking a lot about death and dying
- Your student appears to have low self esteem and/or little self-confidence
- You notice scarring on the arms, pulling out of hair or biting fingernails to the point of bleeding

- Your student cries a lot
- Student asks or hints at needing help (may mean a call to Social Services and you are legally required to report abuse when you suspect it.)
- You notice the student getting more and more lethargic and/or uncaring
- Your student rarely practices and misses a lot of lessons or has a change in practice habits
- Your student is unable to sit still
- Deterioration of physical appearance and grooming