



All Ages

# Music Makes the People (Go) Round

## Activity Music Circle

Duration: ~45 minutes  
Class/Group Size: 6-10 in each circle

Materials: Instruments and/or  
music player

## Goals/Objectives

The participant will feel more comfortable and connected to his or her peers, creating closer relationships between them. The participant will express his or her opinions and feelings clearly and truthfully.

## Description

You're looking for a fun, interactive activity to increase the energy flow between people and to bring people closer together. You want an activity that everyone will love and learn from, to restructure or add to an environment that will help invoke positive emotions between people. This description is what inspired the following activity: A powerful music circle that gives people of all ages an opportunity to use the sounds and voices they love, to connect with one another and establish a trusting environment where everyone feels comfort-

able to share their music, their opinions and their emotions.

This music circle has the potential to draw out innate attributes such as altruism, goodness of heart, and loving-kindness. In this activity, music is the medium that helps maintain the positive emotions and connections between participants, allowing them to share with one another. The benefits aforementioned are suitable tools in school, work, and social environments, where connections and interactions between people occur.



# Directions

**Note:** If there is more than one group, additional music players will be necessary, preferably small, portable music players so that the participants are able to hear one another within their circle.

## Part 1

- 1.** Instruct participants to bring in an instrument, a song, or anything else they would like to, that produces their favorite sounds and/or voices. Tell them they will be sharing the music that they like with one another, and they will also have a **Circle Discussion** about sharing their music.
- 2.** Create circles of 6-10 participants.
- 3.** In each circle, the participants will take turns playing the music that they like with the song/instrument they brought to share. If a participant brought in a digital song, they can sing or play along with it.
- 4.** Before a participant shares, ask him or her to answer the following question first: Why did you choose this particular song or instrument to share? Everyone should listen attentively, while their peers are sharing.

## Part 2

- 1.** At the end of each participant's musical share, have a **Circle Discussion** with the entire circle, asking them: "What did you like about the song/instruments that [insert name] shared with you?" The discussion should be held according to the [Rules of the Roundtable](#), which will turn any discussion into an emotionally and socially intelligent one.
- 2.** After participants share their music and comment on what they liked about each other's song or instrument, ask them to answer the reflection questions in a **Circle Discussion**, continuing to follow the [Rules of the Roundtable](#).



# Directions

(continued)

## Reflection Questions

1. How did it feel to share something musical that you like with others and hear their comments?
2. What similarities can you think of between what you shared and what the person sitting next to you shared?



# Supplementary materials

## Clips to play before/during/after the activity:

- [Rules of the RoundTable](#)
- [The Science of Happiness - If You're Happy and You Know It](#)
- [Barbara Fredrickson: Positive Emotions Transform Us](#)
- [Howard Martin Pt 3/6 - 'Benefits of positive emotions' Conversations With Robyn](#)

## Quotes:

- ***“Our interconnection is also a force for good***  
*In this book, we argue that our interconnection is not only a natural and necessary part of our lives but also a force for good. Just as brains can do things that no single neuron can do, so can social networks do things that no single person can do.”*  
 - Nicholas Christakis, *Connected*
- *“Humans within this planet now are the newest experience of the universe in what, biologically, always seems to come down to cycles: of unity to individuation, through which arises conflict, negotiations happen, cooperation is arrived at; and we go to unity again at the next higher level.”*  
 - Dr. Elisabet Sahtouris
- *“What is necessary to change a person is to change his awareness of himself.”*  
 - Abraham Maslow



# The Science Behind it

- When researchers asked Harvard students: “What’s the best thing that happened to you in the last month?” - they all talked about experiences with other people.

*Miller, C. (2012, December 31). Crossroads: labor pains of a new worldview | FULL MOVIE. Retrieved June 24, 2014 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n1p9P5ee3c#t=1823>.*

- Scientists have analyzed many studies looking at what determines our happiness and brought it down to three things: genes, life circumstances, and intentional activities and practices.

*Lyubomirsky, S., & Della Porta, M. D. (2010). Boosting happiness, buttressing resilience. Handbook of adult resilience, 450-464.*

- The effects of positivity have been shown through randomized controlled studies, where scientists induce positive emotions in their subjects by showing them beautiful pictures, having them listen to pleasant music or even giving them a bag of candy, and then testing all kinds of things.

*Fredrickson, B. L., & Branigan, C. (2005). Positive emotions broaden the scope of attention and thought-action repertoires. Cognition & Emotion, 19(3), 313-332.*

- Positive emotions have been shown to increase attention in individuals and help broaden the spectrum of thoughts and subsequent actions.

*Fredrickson, B. L., & Branigan, C. (2005). Positive emotions broaden the scope of attention and thought-action repertoires. Cognition & Emotion, 19(3), 313-332.*