Mindful Listening

Lead this “Listening to the bell” exercise to encourage mindful listening. This is a simple practice and can be repeated daily, perhaps increasing the class’ practice for longer periods over time. You will need a “mindfulness bell,” which has a sustained sound or a rainstick could be used. If you don’t have access to any of these, you can use an online recording, such as http://www.onlinemeditationtimer.com.

Instructions and script:

1. Read the script below aloud in a slow, gentle voice at a rhythmic pace with many pauses.

2. “Today’s mindful moment is a practice in listening mindfully.”

3. “Please get into your ‘mindful bodies’-- last time we discussed that this means being still and quiet, sitting upright, with your eyes gently closed.”

4. “Now place all your attention on the sound you are about to hear. Listen until the sound is completely gone.”

5. Ring the bell. As it begins to ring say, “Please raise your hand when you can no longer hear the sound.”

6. When most or all have raised their hands, you can say, “Now slowly move your hand to your stomach or chest, and just feel your breathing, remembering the balloon exercise we did last week.”

7. You can help students stay focused during the breathing with reminders like, “Just breathing in...just breathing out…”

8. Ring the bell again to end.

9. Invite feedback from the group about their mindful experience.