



# RESOURCES

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WE ARE THE RESOURCE.**

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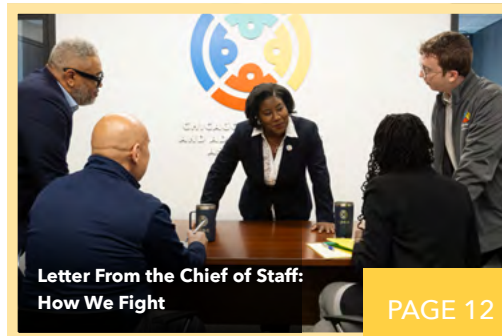
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# WELLNESS

## **BRAIN TAPPING:** MINDFUL LEADERSHIP DAILY PRACTICE

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Mindfulness, in the words of Jon Kabat-Zinn, is “awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally.” A deceptively simple-sounding formula, but there is actually quite a lot to unpack, examine, comprehend, and put into practice.

And that is where Brain Power Wellness (BPW) comes in! Be sure to check out our website ([www.brainpowerwellness.com](http://www.brainpowerwellness.com)) and our YouTube channel to explore some of the ways BPW uses mindfulness to create changes in our lives and the lives of our students. While we are passionate about working with students, teachers, and parents, we recognize the unique challenges and power that school administrators have to create healthy cultures in our communities.

Brain tapping is a simple mindfulness exercise that I utilize in all my BPW Executive Leadership training. As leaders, we are constantly solving problems, thinking creatively, and utilizing vast reserves of emotional and logical intelligence. It’s all too easy for us to “live in our heads,” relying primarily on our intellect to make decisions and address the needs of our schools. Over time this can lead to headaches and create

a cycle of overthinking and anxiety for us. We have more than 50 acupressure points in our brain, and when we feel stressed, the energy, blood, and oxygen flow in our brain becomes constricted. This can leave us feeling tired, overwhelmed, and hot-headed. Living with unmitigated stress can not only damage our health but also compromise our ability to solve problems from a clear-headed, solution-oriented space.

Brain tapping offers a simple way to both refresh your brain and release tension in the forehead, temples, eyes, mouth, and jawline, while also shifting your brain waves to alpha waves. Think of it as an easy way to give yourself a luxurious head and facial massage. By creating subtle vibration through tapping your brain’s energy points, you are able to help release the tension that is blocking the natural flow of energy within the brain and unlock the powerful creative energy of the alpha brain wave state.

As you practice this exercise, I invite you to keep breathing out fully through your mouth (holding one’s breath is a form of tension) and gently smiling (which helps to release endorphins).



## SIT COMFORTABLY AND TAKE A FEW DEEP BREATHS.

Sit comfortably and take a few deep breaths. Check in with the “state” of your brain. Does your brain feel energized or tired? Hot or cool? Relaxed or stressed? Close your eyes and begin gently tapping the top of your head with your fingertips. Keep breathing out through your mouth as if you are making a gentle sigh. Tap the sides of your head and the back of your head, staying with one area of your head for a few breaths at a time. Slowly make your way down to the base of your head where your neck meets your skull. Maintaining a sense of curiosity and nonjudgment, notice which parts of your head feel tense or painful and gently tap these areas, going into the feeling. As you exhale, imagine you are releasing all the tension in this specific part of your brain. Imagine your brain is becoming brighter and lighter as you continue releasing more and more tension. Slowly make your way to your forehead and gently tap your temples. Tap your eyebrows and around your eyes, releasing fatigue from your eyes. Allow your fingertips to tap your cheeks, your sinuses, your jaw—all the while continuing to exhale as if you’re making a gentle sigh. After a few minutes of tapping, allow your hands to rest on your knees. Focus on deep, cleansing breaths as you naturally focus on the sensations of energy circulation in your head and face. You may feel some tingling and a sense of lightness. As you breathe in through your nose, imagine you are breathing in positive, bright energy to your brain. As you exhale through your mouth, imagine you are gently releasing any remnants of tension or stress.



I hope you can utilize this simple exercise at any point of the day (including at work!) when you feel stressed, tired or overwhelmed. I hope you can feel the transformative shift that this simple, intentional exercise can have on your brain health and on your executive functioning. Be well.



**DAVE BEAL** is the CEO and Executive Director for Brain Power Wellness and author of the book *The Brain Power Classroom*. A former New York City classroom teacher, Dave has had the honor of

sharing mindfulness, community building and holistic wellness training with over 600 schools and almost one million students since 2007. Dave is proud to be partnering with CPS and CPAA to share wellness tools with the Chicago community. For more info, please visit [www.brainpowerwellness.com](http://www.brainpowerwellness.com) or contact Dave at [dave@brainpowerwellness.com](mailto:dave@brainpowerwellness.com).



**At the CSA/AFSA Conference,** Gerald, Troy, and Kia had the chance to catch up with Dave Beal, our trusted wellness partner. Dave, who led an insightful session on wellness for school leaders, introduced simple but powerful strategies to help principals and assistant principals manage stress and enhance their overall well-being. Through hands-on exercises, participants experienced wellness practices they could use in both group settings and individually.

The response in the room was 100% positive. While there may have been some initial hesitation—especially since many participants didn't know one another and were paired up—any uncertainty quickly disappeared. That's not just because of Dave's incredible ability to connect

## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

The last few months have brought significant changes and challenges in our city, and it's been a lot to carry.

Through it all, we want to remind you to prioritize your emotional and physical well-being. Yes, the external stresses we face—political tension, ongoing negotiations, and the weight of uncertainty—are real and hard to ignore. But so is the internal need for rest, recharge, and healing.

While the work continues to demand our attention, without nurturing your own well-being, it's impossible to give your best or keep going with the strength and focus that our work requires. Step away when needed. Find moments to breathe deeply, reconnect with your colleagues, and remember that your whole health matters—body,, mind, and spirit.

Please know that your union is here, pushing forward, advocating, and standing with you at every turn. You are not alone, and together, we will navigate these times.

Stay strong, stay healthy, and know: We've got this – together.

with people through vulnerability and humor, but also because the exercises themselves were genuinely helpful. For those of you who have experienced one of his courses, you know exactly what we're talking about! As Kia said, "It wasn't weird at all. What I felt was that it was necessary. His session was an amazing addition to the conference."

We're excited about the next opportunity to partner with Dave and bring more of his wellness work to our CPAA members. Supporting the emotional well-being of school leaders is a crucial part of our mission, and we're committed to ensuring that leaders have the tools they need to protect themselves in this demanding work.