

Working from home? Switch to the DIGITAL edition of *Musical Merchandise Review*. [CLICK HERE](#) to signup now!

[Media Kit](#) [Submissions](#) [Contact](#) [Subscribe](#)



## In Tune: Music as the Bridge to Mindfulness

Jaimie Blackman • The Sound of Money • March 27, 2020



*"Periodically immersing, yourself in the culture of calm attention can tone down the effects of these stress-producing circumstances."* – Richard Wolf

While your accountant or financial advisor may help you conduct an emergency cashflow audit by helping you calculate how quickly you're burning cash, and perhaps offer some creative ways of repurposing your in-house team to be your virtual ambassadors, I'd like to ask you to conduct an emergency "wellness" audit by asking you the following questions:

*How are you coping with the impact of COVID 19?*

- *What are your inner thoughts?*
- *Do you have a mechanism to quiet the noise, so you can be more creative?*

Most performers have heard the comic line, "How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice." It turns out that the discipline of sitting down (guitar player bias), taking out your instrument, and rehearsing a tune comes as second nature to music makers.

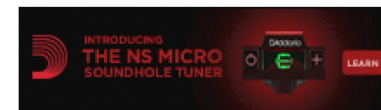
When we are in the zone, and the gods of music are smiling at us, we are one with the music – no extraneous futurizing, or gremlins from the past coming between what you hear and what you play. We entered music heaven. Another way of thinking of this: we have entered a *mindful* state.

My wife and I have been practicing meditation since the 1970s. When she bought me Richard Wolf's book, *In Tune. Music As The Bridge To Mindfulness. How You Can Build a Lifelong Meditation Practice Through Sound- and Silence*, I was intrigued.

When I began reading it, I couldn't put it down. When I got to the end, I re-read it. All of a sudden, my meditation practice – and my music playing and listening skills – were turbocharged. The best part was the increased silence entered all parts of my day-to-day activity. Who would ever think that practicing my chops could be used as a path to present moment awareness, or as I think of it, a "sacred space?"

I was unaware of any other book that created a roadmap for the musician to master the art of mindfulness. In case you've never heard of Richard Wolf, (please do a quick search) let me tell you about him. Here's his short bio as it appears on the back cover of his book: "Mr. Wolf is an Emmy Award-winning composer, multi-platinum-selling music producer, and professor at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of music, where he teaches class on music and mindfulness."

In his book, Wolf charts twelve "bridges"- skills and sensibilities refined in musical practice that carry over to mindfulness and meditation. Among them: Concentration, Posture, Harmony,



Silence, The Art of Deep Listening, Transcending the Self.

The concept is easy to understand, but it does take practice. Most meditation practices spotlight breathing. There's a saying that, "One who controls the breath, controls the mind."

Try this breathing mindfulness meditation which is on page 78 of his book. Sit on a comfortable chair and in a space where you will not be distracted. This works for me with my eyes open or closed.

Count a four-bar sequence in 4/4 time. The inhalation would be one bar of a four-beat count, the holding of the breath one bar, the exhalation one bar, and finally one bar of pause after the exhalation. The count goes like this:

Inhale	Hold	Exhale	Hold
1234	1234	1234	1234
2234	2234	2234	2234
3234	3234	3234	3234

Remember that there is no strict metronome, only a soft internal pulse. As with all counting methods, if at any point you lose count, just return to one.

To begin, I suggest you start with counting up to 10.

"All of man's misfortunes derive from one thing, which is not knowing to sit still in a quiet room." – Blaise Pascal, 17th century inventor of an early digital calculator and roulette machine.

Now it's practice time. Turn down the internal noise.

*Jaimie Blackman – a former music educator & retailer– is a financial advisor, succession planner & certified business advisor. Blackman is a frequent speaker at NAMM's Idea Center. Jaimie writes The Sound of Money a monthly column for MMR. Visit, [bhwealth.com](http://bhwealth.com) to subscribe to newsletter and podcasts. Registered representative, First Allied Securities, Inc. Member FINRA/SIPC.*



0 Comments   Musical Merchandise Review   Disqus' Privacy Policy   Login ▾

Recommend   Tweet   Share   Sort by Best ▾



Start the discussion...

LOG IN WITH

OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS

Name

Be the first to comment.

Subscribe   Add Disqus to your siteAdd DisqusAdd   Do Not Sell My Data

The Latest News and Gear in Your Inbox - Sign Up Today!

**Check Out Some Past MMR Magazine Issues**