

From Frog to Royalty: Finding your morning voice *Start Your Day*

AUTHOR(S):	Yoshi Silverstein
TOPIC (S)	Embodied practice; music & song; morning experience; spiritual practice
SUMMARY	We all wake up a little froggy — get into your voice, breath, and body to awaken the royal baritone inside. We'll include some gentle movement and breathwork to get things open and flowing, and a combination of singing and vocal work to lift our voices out of the morning muck and into the open air, ready to take in and take on the day! This session is rooted in but not limited to traditional Jewish morning liturgy and ritual. Expect things to include a little bit of familiar and a lot of different.
GOALS:	Guide participants through embodied practices — in this case, primarily breath- & vocal-related — that awaken and enliven the body and spirit. Demonstrate a range of tools that can be used for similar programs in different contexts. Model an alternative approach to morning spiritual practice that plays with traditional Jewish liturgy and themes but goes in many different directions.
AUDIENCE:	As written, primarily for older learners (HS and up) but can be adapted for all ages.
TIMING:	30 minutes
APPENDICES:	Songsheet
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear comfortable, non-restrictive clothing • Optional: meditation cushion for sitting (or similar); prayer rug or yoga mat • Songsheet
SET-UP DETAILS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some space to move in • Comfortable & quiet place to sit without a lot of distractions around

SESSION TIMELINE:

- 00:08-00:15 - Listening Party
- 00:15-00:20 - Reflecting and selecting your group
- 00:20-01:05 - Time in groups
- 01:05-01:15 - Share back and reflection

SESSION OUTLINE:

- 00:00-00:08 — Welcome and opening practice
- 00:08-00:15 — Breath, Song, & Space
- 00:15-00:20 — Breath & Body — Breathwork to awaken & expand
- 00:20-00:23 — Modei Ani I
- 00:23-00:27 — Breath & Stillness Meditation — Box breathing
- 00:27-00:30 — Closing — Modei Ani II (every day melody)

SESSION DETAILS:

- 00:00-00:08 — Welcome and opening practice
 - Open with a Niggun (wordless melody) as participants enter and settle in — choose something simple, without a lot of flourishes or variation/range requirements
 - Lead guided breathwork — framing: observe the sensations in your body, think about an intention you have for the day
 - Options for directing focus of breath:
 - To the front, behind, either side, above, below
 - In circle or spiral patterns around, down, up through the body
 - Chest breathing (breath into chest)
 - Belly breathing (breath into belly)
 - Return to niggun — noticing any changes, different sensations

- 00:08-00:15 — Breath, Song & Space
 - Vocal Tracking — Exploring internal & external space through voice
 - Demonstrate vocalizations directed in six directions (front/back/right/left /up/down) — internal (within the mouth cavity) + external (directed into the room / space around them)
 - (this practice is adapted from teachings of Victoria Hannah)
 - Begin by isolating each direction — demonstrate then invite participants to try it
 - Then, invite participants to explore and improvise with their own voice and space — any/all directions, internal and external
 - Return to niggun — noticing any changes, different sensations

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- 00:15-00:20 — Breath & Body — Breathwork to awaken & expand
 - Guide participants in more physical/intensive breathwork practices combining breath with movement patterns — may remain sitting or use as opportunity to stand and move a bit more — options include:
 - Breath-bends — lift right arm into air, inhale as stretch and bend towards left side as arm raised, lengthening through right side of body; exhale returning to center / neutral position; repeat on same side 2-4 more times then switch sides and repeat
 - Twisting breath
 - a) hands together behind head, inhale as you twist towards the left; exhale back to center; repeat the opposite direction
 - b) begin the same, inhale as twisting towards the left; exhale continuing past the center twisting all the way to the right then back to center all while exhaling; repeat to the opposite direction
 - Spine motion (from standing)
 - a) inhale while raising arms from side to overhead, stretching spine, expanding chest and back; exhale lowering arms returning to neutral center
 - b) inhale while lengthening and arching spine forward through the chest; exhale moving spine back through center and arching opposite direction towards behind
 - c) inhale arching spine towards behind the exhale moving spine forwards through the chest
 - d) inhale raising arms to overhead, exhale into forward bend letting spine lengthen and relax; inhale slowly bringing spine back to standing, exhale to neutral standing position;
- 00:20-00:23 — Modei Ani I
 - Lead the first tune for Modeh/ah/ei Ani — may use same tune as niggun from before or could be different — consider how the choice of tune will pick up from and / or connect to energy of prior practices
- 00:23-:0027 — Breath & Stillness Meditation — Box breathing
 - Give instruction on next couple steps so participants are oriented
 - Return to Modei Ani or niggun briefly
 - Transition into stillness practice using vocal cue or meditation chime / bell
 - Practice: Box Breathing
 - Start with one cycle of box breathing at one beat per side
 - Then two cycles with two beats per side
 - Then three cycles with three beats per side ... etc

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- Continue and either stay when you find the pattern that feels right for you or continue to increase beats until the time is complete
 - *Box Breathing* — breathing structure where there are four equal “sides” of the breath (inhale, hold, exhale, hold) that follow the same number of beats: eg inhale for 3 beats, hold for 3 beats, exhale for 3 beats, hold for 3 beats ...
 - Other than the breath, focus on keeping the rest of the body completely still
- 00:27-00:30 —Closing — Modei Ani II (every day melody)
 - Signal the end of the stillness meditation either with a chime / bell or simply by beginning to sing softly
 - For seminar we'll begin with Every Day and then sing Modei Ani to the same tune
 - Sing a couple times through then invite participants to share in chat a gratitude & intention to bring through the rest of the day as you continue to sing
 - Complete the final repetition of song, thank everyone for coming, close the session

BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP & SHIFTING TO IN PERSON:

In order to best adapt this program for in camp use we would suggest:

- Have an inviting space set up for participants — everyone in one circle if small enough group; otherwise in concentric full or semi-circles
- Chairs work but if possible we recommend meditation cushions or “backjacks” (floor chairs with a seat cushion + back rest) or everyone simple on the floor / ground if that will be comfortable for participants (e.g. younger folks)
- Yoga mats may be a helpful addition or alternative to cushions, particularly if you plan to do more active movement
- For vocalizations, consider how that runs differently with multiple voices playing in the same space — folks can still be directed in the same ways, but you could also play with e.g. having everyone direct the vocalization towards the same part of the room, or all outwards, into the circle, etc and see how the group element may or may not shift what is created