



Creating Connection Through Silent Partner Yoga

Nancy | Yoga Teacher | Cherry Hill, NJ, USA



The Challenge

Nancy wanted to teach empathy to upper elementary students in a meaningful way while helping all her students learn to breathe and take a pause, to calm their bodies and settle their minds using various breathing techniques and engaging activities.



Action

- Designed an innovative empathy lesson using partner yoga poses.
- Created a "no talking" rule—students had to communicate only through movement and body language.
- Handed out pictures of partner poses and had students work together silently.
- Rotated partners and poses every 7 minutes to maximize interaction.
- Allowed laughter while maintaining the silence rule.



The Results

- Initial skepticism transformed into complete engagement within 5 minutes.
- Students became so absorbed they didn't want to leave when parents arrived for pickup.
- Laughter filled the room, creating joy and connection.
- Students developed non-verbal communication skills and deeper empathy.
- Created one of Nancy's most successful classes ever.

In Nancy's Words

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"The laughter was my reward! And when it was time to leave (parents were picking them up) the kids weren't finished, they wanted to stay and keep going. It was one of my most successful classes!"

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Why?

Why It Worked

- Removed verbal communication barriers, forcing deeper connection through movement.
- Made the activity playful and engaging rather than lecture-based.
- Created multiple opportunities for connection by rotating partners.
- Allowed natural joy and laughter while maintaining structure.



A Takeaway for You

Sometimes the most powerful lessons happen when you remove what seems essential (like talking) and let children connect in new ways. Don't be afraid to try unconventional approaches—breakthrough moments often come from creative constraints that push students out of their comfort zones.