

## InnerActive Rhythm: 6 Rhythm Exercises to Tap Into Mental Health

The drum is often called "medicine" in many indigenous cultures due to its healing properties. Drumming and rhythm programs have evolved in the United States and worldwide, with evidence-based studies showing that music therapists and healthcare professionals successfully incorporate drumming practices into their therapy sessions. This practice not only has positive effects on mental health and overall well-being. It provides opportunities to educate, celebrate diversity, and foster cultural respect. Drumming can support well-being by including safe rhythmic activities, helping build connections, decreasing stress, and supporting creative expression—source: *"The Healing Drum: African Wisdom Teachings"* by Yaya Diallo.

Rhythm exercises you can use to support mental health are:

1. **Heartbeat Drumming:** Mimicking the rhythm of your heartbeat by playing a steady, slow drumbeat can help regulate emotions and promote a sense of calmness.
2. **Expressive Drumming:** Allowing yourself to freely express your emotions through creating rhythms with unconventional/hand-made objects can serve as a cathartic release and provide creative exploration.
3. **Mindful Drumming:** Focusing on the present moment while drumming, paying attention to the sound and sensation of each beat, can help reduce anxiety and increase mindfulness.
4. **Group Drumming:** Participating in a drum circle or group drumming session can create a powerful sense of community and belonging. The shared rhythm and energy can foster connections, promoting social interaction and a sense of support. This communal experience can particularly benefit those seeking to enhance their mental well-being.
5. **Improvisational Drumming:** Playing without a set pattern or structure, along with movement or games, can encourage creativity, self-expression, and emotional release.
6. **Rhythmic Breathwork:** Combine the soothing rhythm of drumming with deep breathing exercises to promote relaxation and stress relief. Start by choosing a simple drumming pattern, such as a steady heartbeat rhythm. As you play the drum, focus on taking slow, deep breaths in sync with the drumbeats. Inhale and exhale deeply and slowly as you strike the drum. This rhythmic breathing technique can help calm the mind, reduce anxiety, and improve overall mental well-being.

Practicing these exercises regularly enhances your drumming practice and promotes a profound sense of inner peace and tranquility.

Ty Andrews, Founder InnerActive Rhythm  
[ty@tyandrewsproductions.com](mailto:ty@tyandrewsproductions.com)  
[@thetyandrews](#)



