

FRIED CHICKEN ?!!

"Gwen, I've heard people coming out of your workshops, classes and private coaching sessions using the term "fried chicken". What are you doing behind closed doors, running a KFC franchise?!"

"Ha! No, but the thought is tempting!"

Here's the scoop:

A little more than 20 years ago, the wonderful foster kids I cared for were helping to set the dinner table while I cooked. One of them had just finished watching Barney, the purple monster, show on TV and started singing the theme song, "I love you, you love me! We're a happy family!" We all loudly, raucously joined in the singing and the kids started banging forks and spoons on the table, counter tops, their heads, my head, wherever they could make rhythm to accompany our song.

Dinner was fried chicken, green bean casserole, red eye gravy and other Southern delicacies, so we started tapping out the rhythm of everything we were eating, then went to the cookbook for more food names to turn into rhythm. Dinner was a bit delayed, but for the decades since, this has been a proven, and fun, way to teach rhythm in strumming the dulcimer.



Post Script: The following day, my then-teen-aged son and a friend were hanging out in his upstairs room. Suddenly, Barney, the stuffed purple toy, dropped from the upstairs 'gallows' banister to his death with a rope around his neck, a note attached with a pen knife to the hangman's noose reading, "Die, Barney, Die!". Girls shrieking. No more fried chicken for the boys.

By Gwen Caeli