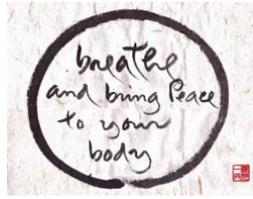


Mind/Body Strategies for All Ages



- Calligraphy by Thich Nhat Hanh

Hands at the ready

Place palms together

As you exhale, press INTO your palms

Repeat (can be also done press feet into the floor, press your thighs, your chair...etc).

Pushing Hands (Peter Levine, Ph.D) Push hands on wall or with partner (slow, sustained)

Slow breathing technique (the “6 second cycle”)

Breathe in and out slowly, using the six-second cycle:

Breathe in for three seconds and out for three second;

Say the word “relax” to yourself every time you breathe out

Blow It Away (from *Breathe, Chill: A Handy Book of Games and Techniques*

Introducing Breathing, Meditation and Relaxation to Kids and Teens by Lisa Roberts

Cup hands together with palms facing up to form a bowl

Visualize anything that’s bothering you

Take a long exhale through your nose

Exhale and blow into your hands sending the worry far away.

Notice how you feel—lighter?

Embracing Our Needs

Think of two qualities that help you to cope (acceptance/support/compassion/courage).

Place your right hand on your left shoulder (or arm) and think of one of the qualities

Keep that hand in place and place your left hand on your right shoulder (or arm) and think of the second quality.

Breathe in. As you breathe out, press your hands on your shoulders or arms.

Take a moment and imagine these qualities as you breathe in and out.

Option: Think of images of a person, place, or thing that helps you cope.

Option: Use slow bilateral tapping of arms or legs (or “butterfly” taps) while imagining the qualities.

Elephant Breath: For Energizing and Calming! Think about something you want to shower yourself with. Stand with your feet apart. Link your hands and dangle your arms in front of you like an elephant trunk. Inhale as you raise your arms high above head and lean back. Exhale and swing your arms down between your legs (if this makes you dizzy, just bring hands down in front of you). Repeat for 3 rounds. On next round, stay up, arch back, and shower yourself with whatever you need right now to feel energized or to feel calm.

~Tara Guber and Leah Kalish *Yoga Pretzels*

Mountain Pose – Stand tall, with feet firmly planted on ground, arms down by side.

Embrace Tiger/Return to Mountain (adapted from Tai Chi)

Breathe in, reach your arms out wide and imagine embracing something very heavy.

Breathe out, pushing your hands down, feel your feet firmly planted.

Imagine you are a large and beautiful mountain ~ steady, solid, and strong

4B’s of Self-Settling (Kornblum, 2003)

BRAKE: Reach up and pull your arms toward your body “catch the energy”

BREATHE: Release and stretch your arms overhead while taking a breath in

BRAIN: Exhale and gently place your hands on your head. Think of a calming, strengthening peaceful thought (e.g. “I am supported” or imagine anything that helps you feel accepted and at peace). Repeat.

BODY: Lower your hands and place them over your heart. Feel your body calm down.

Relaxation/Guided Imagery

This is a gift of time you give to yourself, a time for your own self-care.

- ★ The simple act of breathing changes your physical body. By breathing in peace, calm, and comfort, you release tension, stress and/or worry. This is welcome relief to our bodies.
- ★ As you focus on your breath, pay attention to how your body relaxes ... softens ... opens ... fills with peace. Notice how you are breathing: fast, slow, deep, shallow...etc.
- ★ Begin to let your breathing become deeper and slower; Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth (“Releasing breath”—can make a sound or sigh if you feel comfortable)
- ★ Breathe in slowly with three counts - one ... two ... three. Breathe out slowly with three counts - one ... two ... three.
- ★ Imagine what you’d like to take in for yourself (breathe in) and what you’d like to release (breathe out). Breathe in.../breathe out... (whatever word applies)
 - Examples:
 - Breathe in calm; as you exhale, breathe out stress
 - Breathe in comfort, breathe out tension
 - Breathe in peace, breathe out worry
- ★ Allow your body to soften and relax as you breathe
- ★ imagine a soothing person, place, or thing helps you feels safe and accepted. Breathe in the comfort of this image.
- ★ Ending the relaxation: Gradually begin to be aware of your surroundings—feel your feet on the ground and, if your eyes are closed, slowly open them. Take a moment to pay attention to how you are feeling and what that was like for you.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

a voluntary letting go of tension for your body through the process of tensing and relaxing different muscle groups in a progressive manner.

Can also be done all at once (tighten whole body—release)

Option: Use imagery re: tight/loose (e.g. for children-uncooked and cooked spaghetti; freeze/melt).

Peaceful Place (Guided Imagery): Think about an environment in which you feel calm, safe, and peaceful; a place you would most like to be if you could be anywhere you choose, real or imaginary. Take a few moments to imagine yourself in this place.

Option: Use art, writing, movement, drama, or poetry to show or describe your peaceful place.

FABRIC STRETCH ~ *STRETCH-HOLD-RELEASE* (with colorful Lycra fabric or “Octoband”)

Can do this in groups, pairs or individually with pieces of fabric (different sizes).

- ★ Each participant creates a movement with the fabric expressing a quality (e.g. strength, lightness). If done in a group, members can repeat (or mirror) each participant’s movement.
- ★ Each participant creates a movement that expresses an emotion (e.g. sad, mad, tired, excited)
- ★ Each participant (or the group as a whole) places a symbolic wish in the center of the fabric (can be represented by a scarf) and the group lifts up the wishes and then wraps the wishes up for safekeeping (effective as a closing ritual in individual and group sessions).

For more ideas and information re: Octoband: <https://www.danceforconnection.com/octaband>

APPS for Self-Regulation and Calming

iChill	Breath2Relax	Calm.com
Insight Timer	Headspace	Insight Timer
Oak Meditation & Breathing		Essence
Stop, Breathe & Think		Mind Shift (for anxiety)
Breathr (mindfulness)		Meditation Studio