BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Big breaths can help if you are feeling anxious or having overwhelming thoughts by helping to distract your mind through focusing on your breathing.

- Deep breathing tells your brain to relax when we think there might be something that is difficult, challenging, or dangerous.
- Breathing into your tummy can also help to slow your heart rate and release tension in our muscles to help us feel calmer.
- It is good to take time to practise these techniques so that you know what to do if you are ever feeling stressed or overwhelmed.
- You can use these techniques anywhere, on your own or with family or friends. They are easy to do and for many of them it's just breathing, so no one else has to know you are using them if you don't want them to.

Why not try some now and see if you have a favourite?

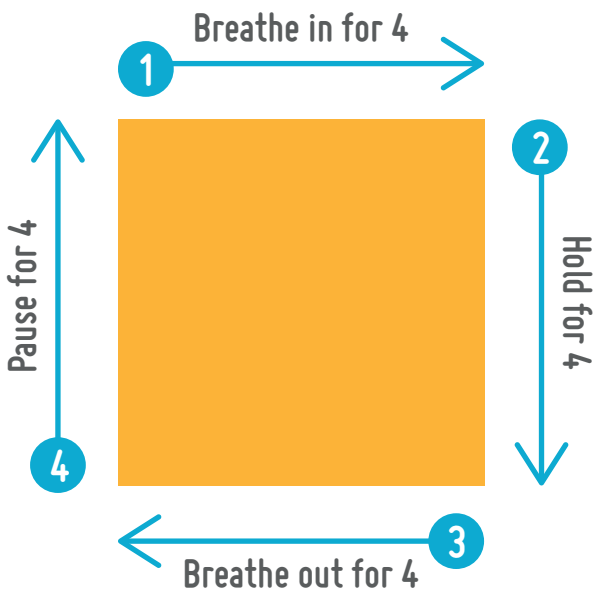


- BOX BREATHING
- FINGER BREATHING
- COLOUR BREATHING
- SLEEPY 8 BREATHING
- BUNNY BREATHING
- TUMMY BREATHING
- CANDLE BREATHING
- MOUNTAIN BREATHING
- LION BREATHING
- SNAKE BREATHING
- BEE BREATHING
- FLOWER BREATHING

SAMH
Scottish Action for Mental Health

The Daily Mile™
children fit for life

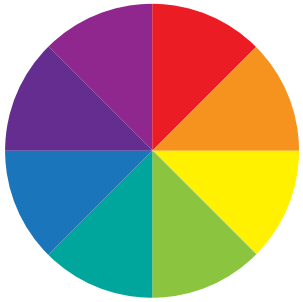
BOX BREATHING



FINGER BREATHING

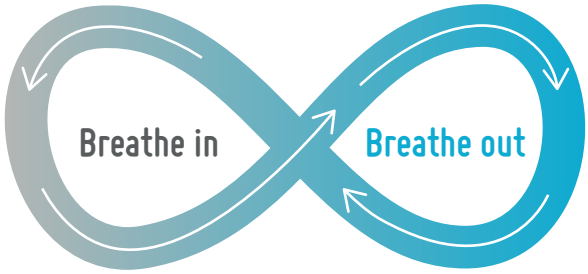
1. Hold a hand out in front of you.
2. Use your pointer finger from your other hand to trace up and down each finger in turn.
3. As you slowly trace up your fingers take a deep breath in.
4. As you trace slowly down your fingers let your breath out.
5. Change hands and repeat.

COLOUR BREATHING



1. Close your eyes and think of a colour for all the good feelings in your head.
2. Breathe in, and think of that colour a filling up your body.
3. Think of another colour for all your not-so-good feelings.
4. As you breathe out imagine blowing that colour out of your mouth, along with your not-so-good feelings.
5. Breathe in your good colour and good feelings, breathe out your not-so good colour and not-so-good feelings.
6. Do this 3 times.

SLEEPY 8 BREATHING



1. Make a lying down number 8 shape with your finger starting in the middle.
2. Move your finger around to one side taking a deep breath in until your finger returns to the middle.
3. Breath out as your finger traces around the other side until you reach the middle again.
4. Do this 3 times.

BUNNY BREATHING



1. Take three short, quick breaths in through your nose.
2. Then one long slow breath out through your mouth.
3. Do this 3 times.

TUMMY BREATHING



1. Lie on your back, with your hands by your side and your legs out straight.
2. Put something small on your tummy (like a soft toy or small book).
3. Take a big breath in and watch as the toy rises on your tummy. Try to keep it balanced.
4. Slowly let your breath out and watch as the toy moves down again.
5. Do this 3 times.

CANDLE BREATHING



1. Close your eyes and imagine there is a birthday cake with candles on top.
2. Take a big breath in, and hold your breath for 4 seconds (to think of a wish!)
3. Now breathe out through your mouth and blow out the candles.
4. Do this 3 times.

MOUNTAIN BREATHING



1. Take a deep breath in, and lift your arms out to the side and above your head.
2. Hold your breath as you bring your hands together over your head.
3. Breathe out and bring your arms down in front of your chest, keeping your hands together.
4. Do this 5 times.

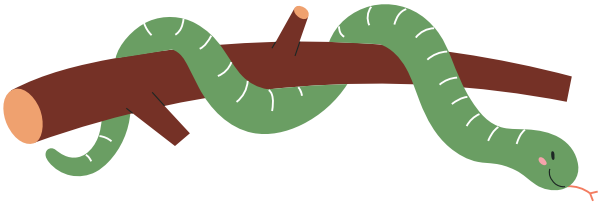
LION BREATHING



1. Put your knees and hands on the ground, take a deep breath in through your nose.
2. As you breathe out, open your mouth as wide as you can and let out a ROAR!
3. Do this 3 times then be quiet again!

NOISY BREATHING

SNAKE BREATHING



1. Sitting in a comfy position, take a big slow deep breath in.
2. Hold your breath for the count of 4.
3. As you breathe out, make a hissing noise like a snake through your teeth.
4. How long you can make the noise last?
5. Do this 3 times then be quiet again.

NOISY BREATHING

BEE BREATHING



1. Sitting with your eyes closed if you can, take a breath in through your nose and count to 4.
2. As you breathe out make a buzzing or a humming noise through your lips like a buzzy bee.
3. If you like, you can also put your hands over your ears to block out anyone else and hear what it sounds like in your head.
4. Do 3 times then be quiet again.

NOISY BREATHING

FLOWER BREATHING



1. Think of a beautiful bunch of flowers.
2. Take a big breath in through your nose as if smelling the flowers.
3. Breathe out wth a big sigh,"aaahhh..." and feel your shoulders drop down.
4. Take another breath in as you smell the flowers again, and another sigh as you breathe out again.
5. Do this 3 times.

NOISY BREATHING

Tier 2: Breathing Techniques

Outcomes:

Curriculum for Excellence: Health and Wellbeing

The national curriculum in England: PSHE

Area of learning and experience: Health and Wellbeing

Personal Develpoment and Mutual understanding

Equipment:
Breathing cards.
If using video, a phone/tablet to scan the QR code

Time needed:
3 - 5 minutes

Participants:
All ages

How to:

1. Choose a **Breathing Technique** card from the pack.

2. The card can be read out by the teacher or child. Alternatively scan the QR code to bring up the video.

3. Children then follow the instructions being read out or explained on the video.

4. When the breathing exercise is finished, replace the card and ask the children how they feel and what they thought of the exercise.

Teacher Tips:

Suggested conversation starters and finishers:

Introduce the activity by saying:
"Today we're going to practice some breathing exercises to help us feel calm. There are lots of ways to do this, but today we're going to try just one."

Close the activity by saying:
"Well done everyone, and thank you for sharing how you feel. Remember, if you ever feel worried, scared, or nervous, taking big, slow breaths can help your body and brain feel calmer and happy."

Other ways to use this activity:

a. **1-2-1 setting:** Child chooses a card to do at the start of the session to help them relax before their work

b. **Longer group activity:** The children work in small groups to create their own breathing exercise using words and pictures, then try them with the class.

c. **Take home activity:** The children take a breathing card in their homework books and are asked to practice it with their parent or caregiver. Have them feedback on how the people at home felt.