

Explore with eyes open or eyes closed



HEART SHINING BREATH (calming, inner awareness)

- Place one hand on your heart and one on your belly
- Notice the movement of your hands as you breathe in and out for 30 seconds - 1 minute

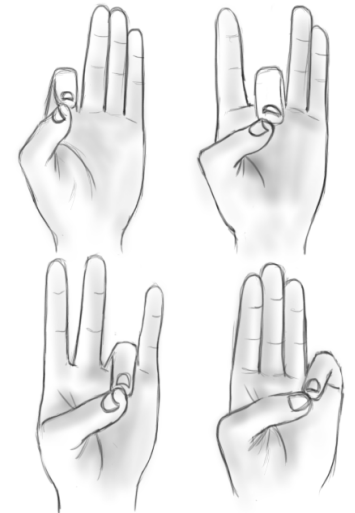
Get curious about the movement. Did both hands move while you breathed in and out? Which hand moved first? Or did they move at the same time? Did the movement change from the start of this practice until the end of the minute?

Next, try this: After you explore this practice by simply noticing the pattern of your breath, let's see how we can direct our breath. This time, see if you can imagine your body like an empty cup. Your breath will become the water that fills the cup. As you breathe in, imagine that you are filling the bottom of the cup. This will fill in your belly first, then in your chest/heart. Your belly will fill and expand, and then your chest will fill and lift. Filling our belly first will help our body send a message to our brain that it is OK to relax.

I AM..... (focusing, calming, positively affirming)

- Choose an affirmation for the day or the moment such as:
I am peaceful, I am in control, I am so smart, I can do this, I can relax, I am focused
You can also phrase this as, "What do I need right now?"
- Slowly tap each finger to the tip of the thumb as you state each syllable of your affirmation
- Begin by stating the affirmation out loud, then as a whisper, then silently to yourself
- Continue for 1 full minute
- End by placing your hands over your heart and imagining that those words have seeped into all parts of your body and mind. This will help keep those words with you for the entire day.

If you find yourself feeling the "opposite" of your affirmation during the day, gently place your hand back on your heart for a breath or 2 to remind yourself of your affirmation. It is all still "in there." Your gentle touch to your heart will rekindle it.



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DOWNWARD DOG/BEAR WALKING/DRAGON'S BREATH (calming, releasing)

- Come to an upside down "V" position and take 3 long, deep breaths in and out
- Walk around the room in this position, taking big steps with your hands and feet
- Every few steps, STOP. Take in a deep breath through your nose. Exhale forcefully by opening your mouth, sticking out your tongue and letting out a strong, deep, ROAR as if you were releasing fire from your belly.

This exercise is effective in releasing anxiety, stress and tension due to emotions such as anger, frustration, disappointment. It is also helpful when you feel confused and stuck on a negative thought, homework problem or a life situation. The pose enhances blood flow to the brain and the breath provides ample doses of oxygen. The imagery of releasing fire also assists when "heated emotions" flair.

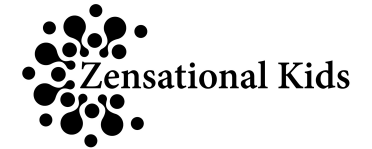
FLOATING BALLOON (focusing, calming, loving-kindness)

- Imagine your favorite colored balloon is floating in front of you. We will use our breath to fill it to its capacity making it very large and light so it can float in the air.
- Along with our breath, we will fill the balloon with kind, helpful, empowering word such as joy, wisdom, kindness, love, hope, strong, etc (for a list of many more affirmative words, go to: <https://zensationkids.com/resources/free-tools-for-students/>)
- As you inhale, think of a positive word. AS you exhale, imagine that word filling the balloon. Each breath puts in another affirmation.
- *Now think of someone you know who can use some kind words today. This can be a family member, a friend, a pet, a distant relative. Picture their face.*
- *Now use your breath to help the balloon travel to them, wherever they are in the world.*
- *Once it arrives, imagine the balloon bursting right infant of them and all of the words that you sent entering their mind, body and heart.*
- *Imagine how this will make them feel.*
- *Notice how you feel sending this balloon of kindness.*



BREATH, MOVEMENT AND MINDFULNESS

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Tapping / Body drumming (building body awareness and grounding)

During this exercise, use long deep breathing and apply the amount of tapping pressure that feels good to you.

- Softly fist your hands and begin tapping at the center of your chest (think of an ape in the jungle mustering up his courage)
- Tap your all around your shoulder, up and down your arm several times and then repeat on other side
- Tap from your left shoulder, across your trunk to the right hip several times then repeat on other side
- Tap your hips, lower back, bottom, and belly
- Tap up and down both legs several times
- End this practice with **Sun Breath**, inhaling your arms overhead to form the shape of a sun then slowly exhale as you float your arms back to the side of your body.

Helpful Video Links

Practices for YOU:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8WCkqdkq5g&t=10s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FdkYaxCkpCM&t=2s>

Practices for your students:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9nGH72RwGY&t=14s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHVZUz7Ek-4&t=9s>