

Mindful Breathing Options

Tips: Consider trying these when going to or from recess, lunch, or before or on a field trip etc. Roll dice to see how many times to breathe. Making a sound (like SHHH) on the out breath can be helpful.

- 1. Starfish (Take Five/Five Finger) Breathing:** Trace your hand with a finger, with each up or down movement, inhale or exhale.
- 2. Ocean Breathing:** Cup each ear with a hand and breathe deeply in and out.
- 3. Elephant Breathing:** Hold your hands in your lap, with your thumbs resting next to each other. With each inhale raise your thumbs up, with your exhale bring them back down to rest. Option: Sitting or standing with each inhale, raise your arms to the sky, on the exhale back down to your lap. Or hold a hand of classmates, and thumb breathe together as you walk in a circle or down the hall.
- 4. Spiderman Breathing:** (Option #1) Sit crisscross on the floor (but can also be done walking). Place palms skyward on your knees. Bring your ring and middle finger in so that they are touch your palms. With each breath open your hands, with each exhale, bring in your ring and middle finger. (Option #2) Inhale and bring closed hands palm in and hold at chest. Exhale, pretending you are shooting webbing from your hands to the wall or ceiling.
- 5. Quiet Coyote Breathing:** Hold up your hand in the air like a quiet coyote. With each belly breath, slowly drop your thumb to create the look of a breathing coyote. Exhale. Repeat.
- 6. Butterfly Breathing:** Option #1: Clasp your hands together like you are begging, trying to also get your forearms and elbows to touch. Squeeze your hands and arms together, and breathe out. On the inhale, keeping hands clasped & slightly under chin, lift your elbows a bit above your shoulders. On the exhale, bring your elbows down so they touch again. Repeat. Option #2: Standing or sitting, on the inhale, bring both arms up alongside your body. On the exhale, lower your arms. Repeat.
- 7. Shark Fin Breathing:** In a seated position, place your hand in front of your face like a Shark fin. As you lower your hand to your heart say to yourself: "Sit Straight, Sit Still, Sit Silently, Shut Eyes, Softly Breathe." "I have the power to make wise decisions." Repeat.
- 8. Smell a Rose, Blow Out a Candle.** Repeat.
- 9. Blowfish Breathing:** Cup your mouth with your hands, like a mask. With each inhale open your hands like gills. Repeat.
- 10. Balloon Breathing:** Use the Hoberman Sphere (Breathing Ball) to fill up our bellies. Or just put your fingertips together and create your own breathing ball. Breathe 3 times alone, then with a neighbor.
- 11. Elevator Breathing (Breathing Buddies):** Laying down, have kids see how big they can make their bellies, with each breath. For more fun, place a breathing buddy (a stuffed animal) on their bellies to see how high they can get their buddy to go up. Limit the number of floors to 3, 4 or 5 dependant on age.
- 12. Rocket Breathing:** Press hands flat together (the capsule), in front of heart placing elbows (the engines) on the floor. Breath in, and as you inhale the rocket takes off (up the center of your body until arms are up above your head, exhale back down so that the elbows land back on the earth. Repeat.
- 13. Firecracker Breathing:** Press hands flat together in front of heart (the fireworks). Breath in, and as you inhale the rocket takes off (up center of your body until arms are up above your

head. CLAP. Then exhale out, with your fingers sparkling downward to be the exploding fireworks. Repeat.

14. Crocodile Breathing: Arms out straight, hands together (right arm above left), breathe-in big and deep while raising right arm, exhale all at once, close crocodile's mouth.

15. Beach Ball Breathing: big breath while opening arms wide and then overhead they come together, slowly - as if against resistance- push (hands rest on top of each other) as if pushing a beach ball underwater, while exhaling.

16. Flower Breathing: Begin in child's pose (curled up, knees bent, forehead on the floor), inhaling and rising up onto the knees extending arms and face up to the sky like a flower opening up in the sun, exhaling reversing back into child's pose arms by side (curling up like a flower in the evening time).

17. Buzzing (Bumble) Bee Breathing: Buzzing on the out breath (Bzzzzzzz...), sucking in honey on the in breath. Repeat. A fantastic way to bring the energy of a class down.

18. Dragon Breathing: Breathe in while making dinosaur hands, exhale fire out, bring hands down.

19. Water Faucet Breathing: Put your arms outstretched, sides of fists touching. Squeeze hands tight and breathe in- exhale and release fingers, sprinkling water down making a shhhhh sound). Repeat.

20. 4-7-8 Breathing: breath in for 4, hold for 7, breathe out for 8. Repeat.

21. Birthday Cake Breath: Role dice to see how many birthday candles you will blow out. Hold hand(s) in front of your mouth, extend the correct amount of fingers (Candles) flickering. Inhale and blow on candles until they are all out. Repeat. Role dice again.

22. Incredible Hulk Breath: On the in breath, Bring arms up like you are flexing your muscles. On the out breath bring arms down slightly, releasing fists slightly, and gently bend knees.

23. Superman Breath: Inhale and bring closed hands to your waist, chest up high. Exhale and bring hands down and out and up and away. I like to say, and "Fly to the moon." Repeat.

24. Wonder Woman (or Cowboy) Breath: Inhale and bring one hand over your head, pretending to spin a lasso. Exhale and pretend to throw lasso. Repeat.

25. Dolphin Breath: Hold palms together at your belly. Inhale and raise hands to your heart. Exhale and pretend to dive into the water. Repeat.

26. Snake Breath: Hold your hands together in front of your chest, in prayer position. Inhale and when exhaling wiggle your hands and arms together upwards, making a "SSSSSS" sound. Repeat.

27. Square Breath (Or Triangle, or Rectangle, or Circle): Hold your pointer finger up, facing away from you. As you draw the lines of the square, breathe in and out. Inhale one line, exhale the next, inhale, exhale. Repeat.

28. Bubble Gum Breath: Pretend you are chewing a big piece of gum, eventually take a deep breath in through your nose. Put your hands on either side of your mouth. On the exhale, pretend your hands are the bubble gum, with each exhale allow the bubble to get bigger and bigger. Eventually bring your hands together with a "clap", rub your hands together and begin again.

29. Flower of Gratitude Breathing: Hold hands upright on your knees, or on the desk, like two closed flowers. With each exhale, think of something or someone that you are grateful for. Your fingers represent 10 petals, by the end of the 10th out breath you will have opened all 10 fingers in gratitude. On the 11th breath, bring your hands to your heart. Breathe deeply 3 times. Share with the group one thing that you are grateful for.

30. **May I be Kind Breathing:** Wrap hands together, thumbs laying side by side, then put hands on your heart and say: "May I have a kind heart." Breathe. Then up to your lips (chin). "May I have kind words. " Breathe. Then up to your forehead. "May I have kind thoughts". Breathe.

31. **KFC Breathing:** Have students silently say to themselves "May I be Kind, (breathe), May I be Focused, (breathe), May I be Calm. Esp. useful during focus time, when students find focusing on their breath too challenging. Option 2: Go around the circle, each child saying only one of the phrases, their neighbor saying the next, and so on. Begin again, until you go all around the way around the circle.

32. **Cupid's Bow Breathing:** Think of someone to send loving kindness or healing to. Stretch arms towards the sky, Knuckles together. Pull one fist back towards your chest, while breathe in deeply. Then breathe out, making a whooshing sound back towards the outstretched fist. Sprinkle hands down around the person you are imagining.

For Breathing Cards, Practices, and Gratitude Activities: Create a Breathing Star Folder, or for how to make a Glitter (Relaxation) Jar or Gratitude Activity (Lotus of Gratitude): go to www.mindfulartssf.org