

Breathe ...

Breathing is amazing!

Beyond the obvious benefit of literally keeping us alive - breathing slowly and deeply is one of the most simple ways of helping to settle our nervous system and increase feelings of calm and wellbeing.

Deep breathing can have a range of wider health benefits, including lowering your blood pressure, reducing stress hormones, balancing levels of oxygen and Co2 and improving your immune system.

When we breathe slowly and deeply, we reassure our bodies that we are safe - which is why deep breathing is brilliant during the melt down moments! The tricky thing is that during those moments we are not really in a place to learn new things.

But if we can regularly practice deep breathing with our children - and build it into our daily routine - we give them tools that they can draw on during the tricky times to help themselves become calm and regulated.

On the next few pages, you will find 6 simple breathing activities that you can practice with your children. It can be helpful to choose a time when they are calm and happy - bedtime can be a really great time and the bedtime breathing prayer is a great activity to do before they go to sleep!

And deep breathing isn't just for kids!!

For me, joining deep breathing with prayer and scripture is a no brainer and a great way to punctuate your day with moments of stillness.

If you would like to explore this further - you'll find more info on the Living Well website, along with an adult Breathing Prayer resource.

<https://living-well.online/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Breathing-Prayers.pdf>

God formed Man out of the dirt from the ground
and blew into his nostrils the breath of life.
The Man came alive - a living soul!

Genesis 2:7

wonderfulme.org.uk



Butterfly Breathing



Cross your arms and rest your hands on your chest with the middle finger of each hand resting just below your collar bone - your thumbs will be pointing at your chin.

Gently flutter your butterfly wings, slowly and steadily - left, right, left, right - by tapping your hands on your chest.

Now take 3 big breaths:

Breathe in - tapping left, right, left, right

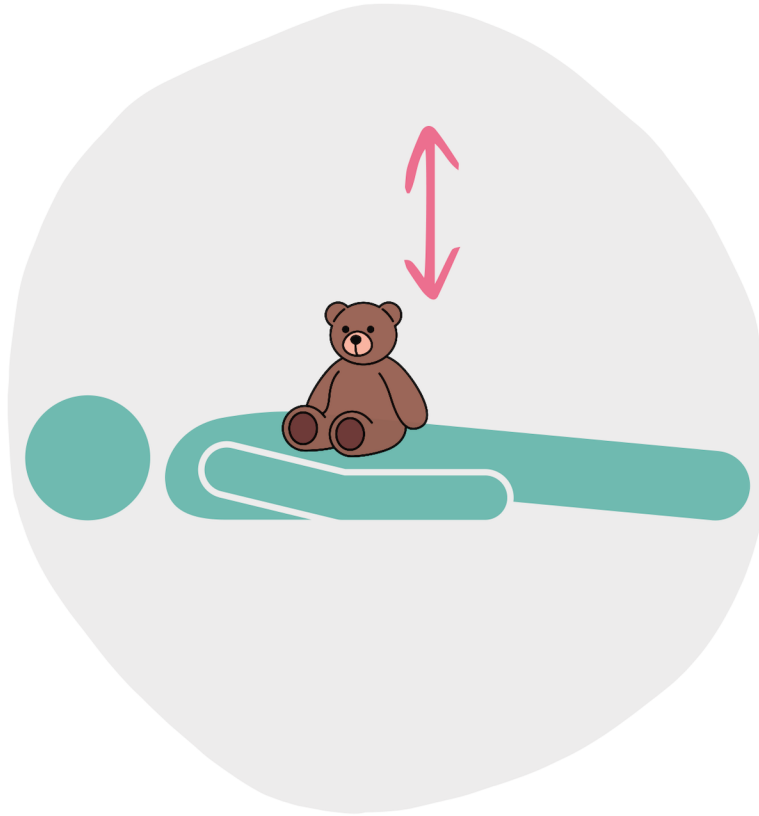
Pause - tapping left, right, left, right

Breathe out - tapping left, right, left, right

Pause - tapping left, right, left, right



Teddy Bear Breathing



Lie on your back and place a soft toy on your tummy.

Take a big breath in through your nose - filling your tummy with air to make your teddy bear rise up. Breathe out through your mouth, watching your teddy sink back down.

Repeat 3 times.



Rainbow Breathing



Crouch down in a tiny ball and give yourself a big hug.

Count to 5.

Stretch up high and reach as high as you can as you take a big breath in through your nose.

Count to 5

Make a big rainbow as you lower your arms, breathing out through your mouth.

Count to 5

Repeat 3 times.



Hand Breathing



Use your hand to help you take 5 big breaths.

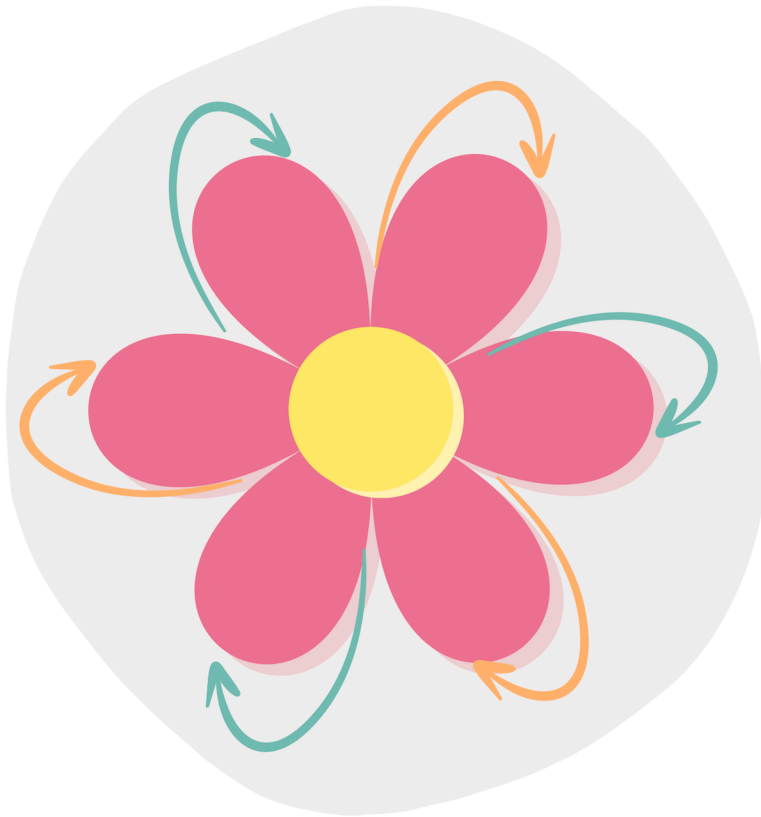
Hold your left hand out in front of you, palm facing up.

Using the pointy finger of your right hand, slowly trace around the outline of your left hand. You'll need to go slowly to avoid shooting off the ends of your fingers!

As you trace up a finger or thumb take a big breath in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth as you trace down it.



Flower Breathing



Very slowly and carefully, trace around this flower as you take 3 big breaths.

Take a big, slow breath in through your mouth as you trace a petal with an orange arrow.

Breathe out slowly through your mouth as you trace a petal with a blue arrow.



Breathing Prayers



zzzz

In peace I will lie
down and sleep

for You alone, O
Lord, will keep me
safe

Psalms 4:8 NLT

Slowly read the bible verse in your head - or ask a grown up to read it to you.

Take a big, slow breath in through your nose as you read the words in blue.

Breathe out through your mouth as you read the words in orange.

Repeat 3 times.

