



RESOURCE GUIDE

Seven 1-Minute Exercises

For Peaceful Self-Regulation

Coming Home to Your Breath and Body

Long deep breathing with breath and body awareness

What it is

This practice is the core of mindfulness practice. As we slow down our breath and relax our bodies, it helps us to settle ourselves and become more aware of what is happening inside and outside of us. It is a way that we can create a feeling that we are safe and that all is well.

Short Hand Version (Everybody's got a job)

- **Breath:** Long, slow and deep
- **Eyes:** Gently closed
- **Hands:** Relaxed at your sides or resting on your knees
- **Posture:** Either sitting up straight or standing tall yet relaxed
- **Focus:** Listen to the sound of the chime. Take long, slow, deep breaths. Listen to the breath. Feel the belly rise and fall, relax your shoulders down, feel your feet touching the floor, balance your weight, create a feeling of settling.

Key Phrases (things to say out loud or silently to oneself)

I am at home in my center. I am safe. All is well.

Super Power

This exercise can help us feel more settled and peaceful at any time. It will help us to speak and act more carefully.

When to use it

Any time! This is a great simple practice to do often. You can create a clean slate by beginning your day with it, use it before or after a transition, or to end the day.

How Long

1-3 minutes

How to do it

At the sound of the chime, still, your body in place, whether you are sitting or standing. Listen to the sound of the bell. If you are comfortable to do so, close your eyes. Relax your shoulders down away from your ears. Relax your belly.

Take a slow, deep inhale through your nose that expands your belly like a balloon and fills up your ribs. Slowly release the exhale until you are empty. Listen to your breath coming in and out.

Feel your feet touching the floor. Allow a settling to happen within.

Feel that it is a time for coming home to yourself. Feel that you are safe in this moment and that you are in charge of this experience. All is well.

When the bell rings a second time, the exercise is over. You can resume your previous activity or move on to the next. Try to keep the sensation with you!

Coming Home to Your Breath and Body

Long deep breathing with breath and body awareness

Science Box (Why it works)

The average person breathes rapidly, shallowly, and without much thought throughout the day. This type of breathing creates a stress state in the body.



Slowing down the breath and bringing attention to it in the form of listening and feeling can affect how the nervous system and glandular system of the person are working. It moves from a more stressful and high emotional state to a calmer state.

Controlled breathing lessens anxiety by overriding the “fight, flight, freeze, or appease” response set off by the amygdala and gives control to conscious thought that happens in the prefrontal cortex.

When breathing is done consciously, the brain is primed to think first and then plan a response, enabling mindful behavior and a more relaxed presence.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

For calming and centering — Moon Side/Sun Side Breath

What it is

This is a very calming breath that allows us to let go of mental chatter and pulls our two brain hemispheres into balance.

Short Hand Version (Everybody's got a job)

- **Breath:** Inhale through the left nostril (Moon side), exhale through the right nostril (Sun side)
- **Eyes:** Close and focused in and up at the brow point or calm jewel
- **Hands:** Left hand in "ok sign," right hand guiding breath through nostrils. Right thumb closes off right nostril during inhale. Right pinky closes off left nostril during exhale.
- **Posture:** Sitting tall
- **Focus:** Alternating the breath from one nostril to the other
- **Focus:** Listening to the sound of the breath. Feeling the balancing.

Key Phrases (things to say out loud or silently to oneself)

When the sun and the moon within me are in balance, I am calm.

Super Power

This breath will bring your right into your calm center. You will enjoy the feeling that your inner world is less pressured by the outer world and that your inner self is integrated, not scattered.

When to use it

When we need to calm down, process a hectic day, center ourselves before an activity, or switch gears.

How Long

1-3 minutes

How to do it

Sitting up tall with a straight spine. Allow the eyes to close and roll the eyes in and up to gaze at the space in between the eyebrows, the calm jewel point. Make the ok sign with the left hand and rest it on your knee. Bring the right hand up toward the face. Use the thumb of the right hand to gently block the right nostril as you inhale through the left nostril.

(Remember to start the inhale by filling up the belly, then the middle of the chest, and then up to the collarbones.)

Then use the pinky of the right hand to block the left nostril as you exhale through the right.

(Remember to empty from the top of the lungs, down through the middle, and then all the way to the bottom).

Then repeat. To end, inhale and hold for a moment, then exhale.

**For Kindergarten through 3rd Grade*

For this age group, instead of using the thumb and pinky to direct air, we are using the entire hand. First, the right hand comes up to block the right nostril while students inhale through the left. Then, the left hand comes up to block the left nostril while students exhale through the right. In the video, Anna is doing the mirror of what the kids will be doing. In other words, the kids can match Anna's arm movements. Teachers can always draw a Moon on the left side of the whiteboard and a Sun on the right side or use some face paint on the student's hands to help them remember which is the correct hand to be using. Remember! Left side is the Moon side; Right side is the Sun side!

Alternate Nostril Breathing

For calming and centering – Moon Side/Sun Side Breath

Science Box (Why it works)



The left nostril correlates to the right brain, while the right nostril correlates to the left brain. Ordinarily, our nostrils switch dominance every couple of hours, thus shifting us from one slightly different way of functioning to the other. Our left brain has a certain set of strengths, like processing language and doing computations, and breaking things into smaller parts in order to understand them. The right brain has different strengths, like feeling big feelings and seeing the whole picture.

When we do this breath, we are able to use both sets of strengths.

Also, in yoga, we understand that the body has two main polarities, a side which is cooling, calming, receptive, passive, feminine (like the moon!), and a side which is warming, active, energizing, male (like the sun!) These polarities are represented by the nostrils, the left being the moon side and the right being the sun side. We can use this understanding to help shift our energy to meet our purpose.

Listen Within

For listening to big feelings and calming emotional upset

What it is

A technique to rescue us when we are upset, and we don't know why, or we can't calm down.

Short Hand Version (Everybody's got a job)

*First drink 1 glass of water (or the equivalent amount from a water bottle)

- **Breath:** Long, Slow and Deep
- **Eyes:** Closed Hands: Fingers straight and lined up, tucked underneath the armpits with thumbs sticking up
- **Posture:** Sitting or Standing with shoulders lifted up high
- **Focus:** Go within and listen to the big feelings. Let yourself tolerate the feeling of upset and let it slowly unwind with the breath. Let the feelings speak to you of the wisdom that will help you.

Key Phrases (things to say out loud or silently to oneself)

When I go within, I find the key to peace.

Super Power

This meditation is 911 for emotional upset. It can help us understand what is happening when we are upset and is a clear instruction for self-soothing.

When to use it

Anytime we feel upset or are having "big feelings."

How Long

1-3 minutes (or however long it takes until we feel relief.)

How to do it

First, drink a glass of water or the equivalent amount from a bottle.

Then, cross the arms, wedge the hands underneath the opposite armpit (let the thumbs be free and stick up toward the sky), and lift the shoulders up to the ears.

Then close the eyes and start breathing long, slow, and deep. You may feel that this shoulder position increases the feeling of uptightness initially. First, allow yourself to feel the upset that you are having. Feel it in your body. Breathe into it, and allow the feeling. See if you can soften to the feeling.

As you continue to do long, deep breathing, ask the feeling what its source is. Can you see what made you feel upset? Give yourself a moment to listen within.

Next, ask if there is a solution. You may just need to have a minute to feel your feelings and comfort yourself, or you may see that there is an action or communication that needs to happen. As you start to feel better, slowly lower your shoulders down.

When you finish, if it is appropriate, take the action or make the communication happen. A trusted adult or friend can help hold space for you during this process.

Listen Within

For listening to big feelings and calming emotional upset

Science Box (Why it works)



One contributor to emotional upset is water balance. Our body is made from approximately 60% water, and our hearts and brains are made from approximately 70% water. If one's water balance is off, it can lead to those systems not working optimally. So when you sense emotional upset, start by drinking a glass of water.

Delving deeper, we can understand some of the brain's inner workings. The limbic system controls emotions and motivations from deep inside the brain. An important part of this system is the amygdala, a pair of almond-shaped bundle of neurons that react to fear, danger, and threat. The amygdala regulates our emotional state by acting as the brain's "security guard," protecting us from threats. When we are in a positive emotional state, the amygdala sends incoming information on to the conscious, thinking, reasoning brain. When we are in a negative emotional state, the amygdala prevents the input from passing along, effectively locking us into a state of "fight, flight, freeze or appease."

By slowing down the breath and placing the body in that protective position, the mind and body can accept the message that it is safe. A relaxation can slowly occur which allow the person to once again have a grasp on what has made them feel upset. That conscious understanding of our big feelings can often lead to the next step in coping and restoring balance.

Open the Space with Your Senses

For expanding outside and in

What it is

This is a way to greatly expand the experience of the present moment.

Short Hand Version (Everybody's got a job)

- **Breath:** Normal
- **Eyes:** Gently open with a soft gaze
- **Hands:** By the sides or resting on the knees if sitting
- **Posture:** Sitting or standing
- **Focus:** Move slowly through the following sense experiences: Listen to the sounds inside and outside, feel the breath, feel heaviness in the body, feel saliva in the mouth, feel sensation in the stomach, then the heart, and let the eyes take in the whole scene. Allowing oneself to feel all sensory information at the same moment. Move slowly through the feeling of the sounds and physical sensations both inside and out.

Key Phrases (things to say out loud or silently to oneself)

Allow what you feel. Include everything. The more you allow, the better.

This technique translates very well to being outdoors! It is a wonderful way to experience nature, which always has sounds, smells, textures, sights, and vibrations to experience.

Super Power

This exercise will relax us and increase our awareness of the present moment! It will also help you attune to your environment and the group you are in

When to use it

Use this to start the day in a calm, mindful way. Use it as a midday break to ground. Use it at the end of the day to release the internal chatter and tension of the day's events. It is a great way to help a group to be more in tune with their environment and connected to each other.

This technique translates very well to being outdoors! It is a wonderful way to experience nature, which always has sounds, smells, textures, sights, and vibrations to experience.

Once you get used to doing this while standing still, you can also do it while walking or eating! Bring that expanded awareness with you wherever you go!

How Long

1-3 minutes (or however long it takes until we feel relief.)

Open the Space with Your Senses

For expanding outside and in

How to do it

Begin by standing in one place and creating a grounded mountain pose in your body. Feel your feet connecting to the ground—move them slightly as if you are rooting them down. Allow your shoulders, face, and hands to relax.

- Listen to the sounds that are occurring around you. You may hear the sound of the wind, birdsong, the rustling of your clothing, distant traffic... listen to the sounds that are far away from you (like cars on the road) and sounds that are near to you (like your own breath). Listen to all sounds at the same time. Resist the tendency to make a list. Let them all occur at the same moment.
- Feel your breath moving in and out slowly and deeply
- Feel the sensation of gravity in your body. Gravity helps you feel the heaviness of your body—that downward pull that keeps our body on the earth. Feel the heaviness in your hands, in your lips, in your feet.
- Let yourself feel that saliva in your mouth. Taste what is on your tongue.
- Feel the inside of your stomach. Are you hungry or full? Is your stomach nervous or relaxed?
- Feel your chest area. Is your heart calm and relaxed, or is it tense? Take one deep breath into the area of your heart.
- Let your eyes take in the whole scene. They can be relaxed and have a soft gaze. Let them not rest on anything in particular, but simply take in the whole scene that you are in.
- Allow all of these sensations to happen at the same time without zooming in on anyone in particular. Let yourself feel present and at peace with what is.
- The more you feel, the better. Allow, allow, allow.

Science Box (Why it works)



All the time, we are surrounded by sights, sounds, textures, smells, and feelings. This can at times, make us feel distracted. We might sometimes feel that if we could block everything out, we might be able to focus on the one thing we are trying to learn.

However, there is a way for us to learn how to be aware of all of our senses in a way that increases but doesn't narrow our focus. The practice of becoming aware of one's senses and including and allowing them can help increase a person's sense of being present and help them sort out what is the most important part to pay attention to.

In our brains, sensory stimuli continually arrive via our spinal cord and are sorted by a system called the reticular activating system (RAS). This network of nerves helps us regulate many of our basic bodily functions and connects the brain stem to the prefrontal cortex and other parts of the brain.

When we practice including the sensory information that comes in, it ultimately strengthens our ability to bring our attention to what we choose. It helps us move from narrow and forced focus to relaxed and receptive attention.

Breath of Fire with Victory Arms

For strength to meet the challenge

What it is

A way to energize ourselves and eliminate fear and negativity.

Short Hand Version (Everybody's got a job)

- **Breath:** A regular rapid pace of breath through the nostrils. The exhale is active, and inhale is passive. We are looking to move the same amount of air out and then in. You can think of a puppy panting, then just do it through the nose. Make sure to pump the belly button to create power.
- **Eyes:** Closed and focused in and up at the brow point (calm jewel)
- **Hands:** All fingers bent and tucked tightly into the tops of the palms, Thumbs sticking out and aimed at each other.
- **Posture:** Arms raised up to 60 degrees
- **Focus:** Focus on building up heat and a feeling of courage. Imagine the space above your head and in between your hands getting charged with light. Feel like you are surrounding yourself with a strong bubble of light.

Key Phrases (things to say out loud or silently to oneself)

I can meet any challenge. I have what it takes. This is my space and my power.

Super Power

This exercise can take away our negative and limiting thoughts. It can open our heart and clear our heads.

When to use it

Use this exercise when you are feeling tired, sluggish, or insecure. If you find yourself falling asleep or zoning out during a lesson, this is an ideal pick-me-up. It helps build confidence and fearlessness in any area—like before taking a test, auditioning for a play, or having an important conversation.

How Long

1-3 minutes

How to do it

Sit tall and raise the arms up to 60 degrees.

Tuck all of the fingers tightly into the tops of the palms and extend the thumbs toward each other.

Close the eyes and focus them in and up to rest at the brow point.

Then begin the breath of fire—by exhaling repeatedly and rapidly through the nose. (The exhale is active and the inhale is somewhat passive, but there are equal amounts of air coming in and going out).

Pull the belly button toward the spine on each exhale, release it on the inhale.

**For Kindergarten through 3rd Grade*

We use a variation of breath of fire called puppy breath. It works the same way as the breath of fire, where students will pump their belly button to fire a cannon-like exhale, but instead of breathing out of their nose, they will be breathing out of their mouth with their tongue extended, panting like a puppy on a hot day. Their arms will be in victory pose, but their hands will simply be open, fingers side by side.

Breath of Fire with Victory Arms

For strength to meet the challenge

Science Box (Why it works)

Breath of fire increases oxygen in the blood, while carbon dioxide levels remain stable.



Oxygen helps our cells perform all of their functions better!

This leads to increased endurance, resistance to stress, reduced addictive impulses, release of toxins from the mucus membranes of the lungs, enhanced balance of the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system, and stimulation of the splanchnic nerves, causing increased output of epinephrine and norepinephrine.

The arm position opens the lungs and strengthens the heart. It strengthens the electromagnetic field that is produced by the heart~ helping us feel more confident and protected.

Lion's Breath

To release tension

What it is

This is a great way to release tension, bolster the immune system and open up one's voice.

Short Hand Version (Everybody's got a job)

- **Breath:** Inhale through the nose. Loud hissing exhale through the open mouth with tongue extended.
- **Eyes:** Close during inhale. Bugged out during exhale.
- **Hands:** Open during inhale. Clenched hard into claws during exhale.
- **Posture:** Seated or standing
- **Focus:** Expelling all of your tension and anger completely.

Key Phrases (things to say out loud or silently to oneself)

I can be fierce to eliminate what my body and mind don't need. I can let go of my tension.

Super Power

This is an excellent way to release tension!

When to use it

When you are feeling sleepy, when you need a "release valve" for tension, or when you want to empower yourself.

How Long

3-5 times

How to do it

Slightly curve the hands with open fingers and place them facing forward up by the shoulders. Inhale deeply through the nose.

When you exhale, stick out the tongue as far as it will go, bug the eyes, clench the hands into claws, tense the face, neck, torso, and legs and make a hissing noise. (You will probably find yourself smiling after this one~ it feels silly).

Science Box (Why it works)

Extending the tongue and breathing with force brings circulation to the throat. The action stretches the muscles of the face, and the breath itself is considered warming.



“Super Cool Breath” with Calm Jewel

To cool down anger or nervousness

What it is

This is a great way to cool off hot emotions like anger and overwhelm. It can help us get calm and cool very quickly. It also helps us digest food (and emotions) better.

Short Hand Version (Everybody’s got a job)

- **Breath:** Inhale through the rolled tongue, exhale through the nose
- **Eyes:** Close and focused at the calm jewel
- **Hands:** Stacked right on top of left with palms facing up and thumbs touching
- **Posture:** Seated with a straight spine
- **Focus:** Drawing deeply on that cooling inhale as if you were sipping a beverage through a straw. Allow that inhale to cool down the irritation.

Key Phrases (things to say out loud or silently to oneself)

My sense of cool and calm comes from within. I can come to my own rescue.

Super Power

This breath helps us cool down, calm down and can even help us release our emotional upset. As a bonus, if you ate too much, or something that didn’t agree with you, this will help your stomach feel better.

When to use it

Anytime you want to give yourself a break, or when you are feeling angry, stressed or nervous. It can be a great way to dissolve frustration and aggression.

How Long

1-3 minutes

How to do it

Sit with a straight spine. Close the eyes and focus them in and up to rest at the brow point (or calm jewel).

Place the hands in the lap, right stacked on top of the left with thumbs touching.

Roll the tongue like a taco. Inhale long, slow, and deep through the rolled tongue, then exhale through the nose. Repeat.

Science Box (Why it works)

Our autonomic nervous system regulates our conscious and unconscious activities. It is like the gas pedal and the brake pedal of our life. When you need to be active, and on the move, you need your gas pedal. When the challenge is over, it’s best to come back to a resting state. Slowing down our breath helps us return to that state of our body where we can “rest and digest” and we can think calmly and creatively.

Additionally, drawing the air over the tongue lets in a very small amount of air which is cooled as it enters. This can cool down a mind which is made hot by worry, anger, or stress.





K E N A I P E N I N S U L A

Our mission at Project GRAD Kenai Peninsula (PGKP) is to impact generational change by enhancing the educational experience of underserved Alaskan students. With respect for culture, we support students as they become empowered: lifelong learners who graduate from high school, prepared to smoothly transition, and realize their post-secondary goals.

PGKP is committed to equitable education for ALL students, regardless of their race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, identity, and beliefs.

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