

TAKE A BREATH!

DEEP BREATHS HELP CALM OUR BODIES.

When we experience stress, our nervous systems fire up and cause our breathing to become more quick and shallow. Taking deep breaths will not fix our stress, but it will help calm our nervous system down so that all parts of our brain can work together (the logical and emotional parts). When both parts of our brain work together, we can make decisions that we feel good about.



Try out some of these breathing activities:

Repeat each breath 3-5 times, and then pause to see what you notice.



HOT CHOCOLATE BREATH:

You can use real hot chocolate, tea, coffee, or just pretend. Hold the cup up to your chin and take a deep breath in through your nose to smell the hot cocoa. Pause to enjoy it. Then, blow out through your mouth to cool off the hot chocolate.

ENERGY BALL BREATH:

While standing, imagine you are holding a small, superball-sized ball of energy in your hands. Hold it tightly. Take a deep breath in and while you inhale, open your hands up as if the ball of energy is growing to the size of a beach ball. Hold this for three seconds. Then, breathe out and bring your hands back together as the energy ball shrinks back to the size of a superball.



MILKSHAKE BREATH:

Imagine you have a thick milkshake in front of you (or use a real milkshake). Take a deep belly breath in through your nose. Then, blow out of your mouth slowly and steadily, as if you are blowing bubbles into your milkshake and don't want to spill.

SQUARE BREATH:

Square breathing has four parts. Take a deep breath in for four seconds, hold that breath for four seconds, exhale that breath for four seconds, and rest for four seconds. It can be helpful to use your finger to draw a square as you breathe.



REFLECT:

1. What breathing activity or activities did you try?

2. What did you notice?

3. How did you feel after your breathing?

CHALLENGE:

Schedule a time each day to focus on practicing a breathing activity.
How will you schedule it into your daily life? (check all that apply)

- Post-It notes Put it in my calendar
 Set an alarm Ask a friend or parent to remind me
 Other? _____

**SHARE WHAT YOU NOTICED WITH
SOMEONE THAT YOU TRUST.**