

JUST BREATHE



"Things falling apart is a kind of testing and also a kind of healing. We think that the point is to pass the test or to overcome the problem, but the truth is that things don't really get solved. They come together and they fall apart. Then they come together again and fall apart again. It's just like that. The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy." *Pema Chödrön, When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times*

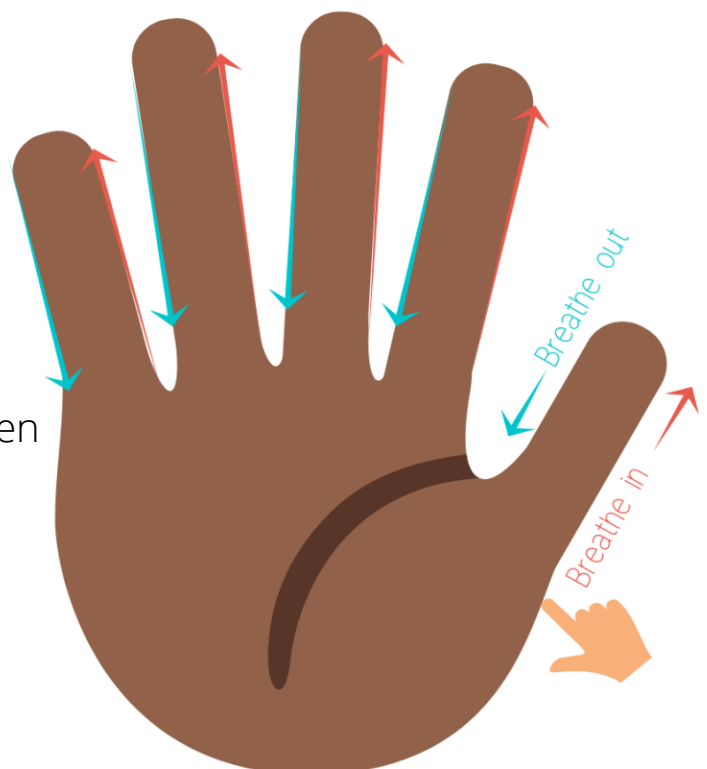
Breathing exercises are one of the surest and fastest way to help bodies relax. It also gives our brains a chance to rest for a minute. This makes it easier to pay attention and manage mad or nervous feelings.

Here are two breathing exercises to try at home:

Five Finger Breath - All Ages

1. On the in-breath, trace up the outside of your left pinky finger with your right index finger.
2. On the out-breath, trace down the other side.
3. Repeat for the next four fingers
4. If your child is older or enjoys this, do all ten fingers.
5. Ask your child to notice how they feel, eg. what feels different inside their body or mind.

5 Finger Breathing



Buddy Breath

Great for beginners or younger children

1. Pick a favourite stuffed animal or toy, for teens or adults use a ball of paper. This will be your "Breathing Buddy".
2. Lay down flat on your back
3. Place your Breathing Buddy on your belly. Take a deep in and watch your it rise with your belly.
4. Slowly exhale and watch your Breathing Buddy slowly sink down. Let the exhale last longer than the inhale.
5. Repeat 3 to 5 times.

Useful Links:

1. [Sesame Street Breathing Song](#)
2. [COVIBook Storybook for kids](#)
3. [Hand on Heart Breathing for Adults](#)
4. [Just Breathe](#)
5. [Weekly BrainWorks Zoom Meeting!](#)
Wednesdays at 10AM
Meeting ID: 418 195 127
Password: 589020

A Note for Parents:

The simplest definition of stress I know is change... changes that are eagerly anticipated, like a vacation and changes that are more difficult, like quarantine. And, at least in my home, every day in quarantine is different from the last. Is it that way for you too? So, stress is one thing we all share.

What's your favourite way to relax for a moment? Breathing exercises are one of the surest and fastest ways to help bodies relax. It also gives our brains a chance to rest for a minute. This makes it easier to pay attention and manage these changes. When you breathe to relax, notice your exhales...let them get longer and slower each time. Practicing a few times a day makes these kinds of breaths more powerful. Some people also find it helpful to say a word or phrase to themselves as the exhale... it will be ok, this will pass... help me... I'm not alone.

We are not alone and have each other to rely upon in the KWCS community.

Please call or email if you'd like more ideas about breathing strategies during stressful times...[**adrienne@kidswithcancer.ca**](mailto:adrienne@kidswithcancer.ca)