



BREATHING TO SUPPORT SLEEP

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BREATHING TECHNIQUES

- Breathing techniques can help to reduce stress and worries - anxiety can make falling asleep more difficult.
- Breathing techniques can trigger a relaxation response in the body.
- It is a way of focusing the mind on the present moment, taking the focus away from a chattering mind.

DRAGON'S (LION'S) BREATH



Benefits: Releasing anxieties and tension in the jaw, neck, and eyes

How to do it:

1. Sit comfortably, taking a breath in through the nose.
2. As you breathe out, open your mouth wide and stick your tongue out as far as it will go towards your chin, making a "Ha" sound.
3. Repeat 1-2 times, before coming back to breathing normally.

BALLOON BREATH

Benefits: Releasing anxieties and tension in the jaw, neck, and eyes

How to do it:

1. Lying down comfortably, place a teddy or other small object (such as stone or shell) on the tummy.
2. Taking a breath in through the nose, imagine filling the belly like a balloon with the breath. Notice the teddy go up with your inhale.
3. As you breathe out through your nose, feel your belly/balloon deflate and your teddy go down again.
4. Repeat 3-5 times before returning to normal breathing.



HUMMING BEE BREATH



Benefits: Focuses the mind, reduces internal chatter preparing the body for sleep

How to do it:

1. Sitting comfortably with both feet on the floor, close your eyes / lower the gaze and cover ears with hands.
2. Take a breath in through the nose.
3. As you breathe out through the nose, make a "hmm" noise (it sounds a bit like a humming bee).
4. Repeat 3-5 times before returning to normal breathing.

STAR BREATH

Benefits: Increases body awareness, focuses on slowing breathing down

How to do it:

1. Sitting comfortably, place your left hand on your knee and take your right index finger to the base of your left thumb.
2. As you breathe in, trace your right finger up your thumb. As you breathe out, go around the top of your thumb around the other side. Repeat breathing in, tracing up your finger, breathing out tracing down your finger until you have traced around your whole hand (and completed 5, slow breaths!)



FOGGY MIRRORS BREATH



Benefits: Cleansing breath, fun, long exhale calms the mind

How to do it:

1. Sit by or hold a mirror in front of your mouth.
2. Take a breath in through your nose. As you breathe out through your mouth, try to gently fog up the mirror.
3. If you're quick, you might be able to draw a smiley face, heart or other favourite thing on the mirror!

MOON AND STARS BREATH

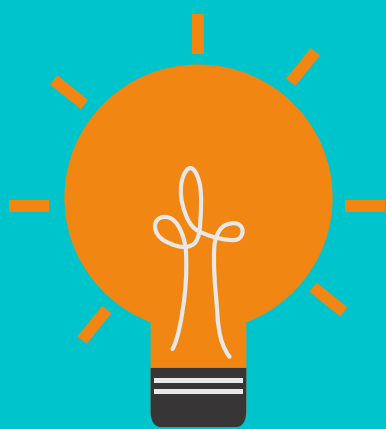
Benefits: Stretches arms and shoulders, long exhale calms the mind

How to do it:

1. Sit comfortably with arms by your side. With an inhale, scoop arms up in a full moon shape, stretching arms and hands high above your head.
2. As you breathe out through your mouth, wiggle your fingers, stretching arms out and down towards your feet, saying "Shh" as you breathe out. Imagine your fingers like twinkling stars as you breathe out.
3. Repeat 2-3 times.



A FINAL NOTE..



Remember that these are just ideas! There are so many different breathing games you can do to calm the body. Maybe you can make up and name your own breathing techniques, making gentle noises to slow your exhale down and calm your body. Good luck!