

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE: CALM DOWN WITH TAKE 5 BREATHING

Our nervous system can be broken down into two different response systems, the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system. The parasympathetic nervous system allows us to relax and calm, while the sympathetic nervous system helps us to prepare for action. Breathing is one of the most basic and accessible ways to turn on our parasympathetic nervous system, allowing our bodies to calm. This particular breathing you may do on your own, with your children or turn into an activity where you breathe and trace your hand. If you find it is too stimulating to “trace” your hand, please feel free to practice the breathing and put each finger down as you proceed, as though you are blowing out birthday candles. "Cake breathing" is another great activity to do with your little ones.

1

Stretch your hand out like a star.

2

Get the pointer finger of your other hand ready to trace your fingers up and down.

3

Slide up each finger slowly, breathe in through your nose. Slide down the other side, breathe out through your mouth.

4

Keep going until you have finished tracing your entire hand.

How do you feel now?

Are you calm or would you like to take another 5 breaths?

