

A PARENT + CHILD BREATHWORK TOOLKIT

The Breathing Space Breathwork Toolkit

Breathe Without Pressure

8 gentle breathing practices for busy bodies, busy minds and big moments.

“The goal is not to make a child perfectly calm. It is to help them notice what changes when they breathe in a different way.”

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Breathing should never become another demand.

These practices are invitations. A child can try one, change it, stop halfway, watch you do it, or decide that breathing is not what they need right now.

Keep it small

Big breaths are not always better. Quiet, comfortable breaths are enough. Over-breathing can make some people feel light-headed.

Skip breath-holds

This toolkit does not use breath retention. For children, I prefer easy breathing that keeps moving.

Offer - don't order

Try: "Want to try a breathing experiment with me?" rather than "Take a deep breath." Choice reduces pressure.

Stop if it feels wrong

Pause if there is dizziness, tingling, chest discomfort, breathlessness or anxiety. Return to normal breathing.

A USEFUL BREATHING SPACE RULE

If breathing makes the moment harder, choose something else.

Breathwork is one door, not the only door. Your child may need connection, movement, food, rest, quiet, reassurance or space instead.

CONNECT

MOVE

BREATHE

NOTICE

This is an educational wellbeing resource, not medical or psychological treatment. If your child has a respiratory, cardiac or other medical condition, or breathing practices trigger symptoms, seek advice from an appropriate health professional.

QUICK CHOOSER

Which breath shall we try?

There is no “best” breath. Start with the one that sounds easiest or most interesting today.

IF THE MOMENT FEELS...	TRY...	WHY PARENTS OFTEN LIKE IT
Suddenly wound-up or overfull	Physiological Sigh	Very short; only 1-3 rounds.
Busy, noisy mind	Humming Breath	The sound gives attention somewhere to land.
Restless but able to focus	Alternate Nostril	The switching pattern creates a clear sequence.
Ready for something quiet	Moon Breath	Simple, slow, low-effort practice.
Likes sensory sound / rhythm	Ocean Breath	Soft sound makes the breath easier to notice.
Needs a longer exhale	Longer-Wave Breath	Gentle emphasis on the out-breath.
Likes predictability	Even-Rhythm Breath	Same-size inhale and exhale; easy to follow.
Needs something discreet	Whisper Breath	Quiet and subtle; easy anywhere.

Try the smallest dose first.

One or two breaths can be enough to notice a change. You do not have to turn every practice into five minutes of “calm time”.

01 MODERN BREATH PRACTICE

Physiological Sigh

A useful one when you want something quick. It uses a normal inhale, a tiny second “top-up” inhale, then a long easy exhale.



How to do it

- 1 Take a comfortable breath in through the nose.
- 2 Before breathing out, take one small extra sip of air in.
- 3 Let the breath leave slowly and easily through the mouth.
- 4 Repeat 1-3 times, then return to normal breathing.

BREATHING SPACE CUE

“In... tiny top-up... and let it all go.”

KEEP IT GENTLE

Do not make the second inhale huge. This is a small top-up, not a competition to fill the lungs.

Nice for parents too: this is one of the few practices in this toolkit that can be useful in just a few seconds.

02 PRANAYAMA-INSPIRED Alternate Nostril Breathing

A simplified family version of *nadi shodhana*. The pattern itself can become the focus: left, switch, right, switch.

How to do it

- 1 Gently close the right nostril. Breathe in through the left.
- 2 Close the left. Open the right. Breathe out through the right.
- 3 Breathe in through the right.
- 4 Close the right. Open the left. Breathe out through the left.

ONE FULL ROUND

Left in → switch → right out → right in → switch → left out.

Try

3-5 easy rounds. Younger children can use whichever finger feels comfortable; no special hand position is required.

Skip it when

The nose is blocked, sore or uncomfortable. Choose a different practice instead of forcing airflow.

The goal is not to perform a perfect yoga technique. We are borrowing a traditional breathing pattern and making it simple enough to feel approachable at home.

03 PRANAYAMA-INSPIRED Moon Breath

Left-nostril breathing is traditionally used in yoga as a quieter practice. Here, we keep it short, simple and pressure-free.

How to do it

- 1 Gently close the right nostril.
- 2 Breathe comfortably through the left nostril.
- 3 Keep the breath soft and ordinary. No giant inhale.
- 4 After 4-6 breaths, release and return to normal breathing.

BREATHING SPACE CUE

“Quiet breath. No need to make it bigger.”

WHEN IT CAN FIT

Before sleep, after a busy transition, or simply when a child wants a quiet breathing experiment.

I avoid promising that one nostril will “switch on” a particular branch of the nervous system. I prefer: traditional practice, gentle experiment, notice what your own body does.

04 TRADITIONAL PRANAYAMA Humming Breath

Inspired by *bhramari*. The hum makes the exhale easy to hear and feel, which gives a busy mind something concrete to notice.

How to do it

- 1 Breathe in gently through the nose.
- 2 As you breathe out, hum a comfortable “mmmmmmmm”.
- 3 Notice where you can feel the vibration: lips, cheeks, throat or chest.
- 4 Repeat for 3-5 humming breaths.

BREATHING SPACE CUE

“Can you make the hum soft enough to feel it?”

TRY TOGETHER

Parent and child can hum on the same exhale. It can feel connecting without needing eye contact or conversation.

No need to hum for as long as possible. Stop before the breath feels strained and let the next inhale arrive naturally.

05 TRADITIONAL PRANAYAMA Ocean Breath

A very gentle introduction to *ujjayi*. The aim is a soft whispering quality at the back of the throat - never a harsh or forced sound.

How to find the sound

- 1 With the mouth open, breathe out as if you are gently fogging a mirror: "haaah".
- 2 Notice the soft whisper at the back of the throat.
- 3 Now close the mouth and see if you can keep just a hint of that sound while breathing through the nose.
- 4 Try 4-6 easy breaths.

BREATHING SPACE CUE

"A quiet ocean, not a roaring one."

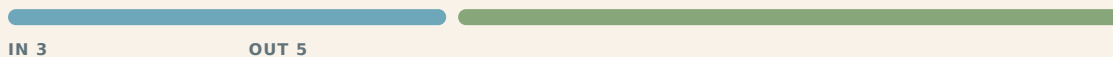
IMPORTANT

If the throat feels tight, scratchy or effortful, stop making the sound. Ordinary nasal breathing is completely fine.

Some children love audible breathing because it makes an invisible process easier to notice. Others dislike the sensation. Both responses are useful information.

06 GENTLE BREATH PACING Longer-Wave Breath

This is not “take a huge deep breath”. The inhale stays comfortable; the exhale simply gets a little more room.



How to do it

- 1 Breathe in gently for a comfortable count of 3.
- 2 Let the breath out for a comfortable count of 5.
- 3 Repeat 4-6 times if it still feels easy.
- 4 If 3/5 feels too long, use 2/3. If counting creates pressure, skip the numbers entirely.

BREATHING SPACE IMAGE

“Let the wave come in gently. Let it travel a little further back out.”

The useful part is not the exact ratio. It is the feeling of an easy exhale that is a little longer than the inhale - without strain.

07 RHYTHM BREATHING

Even-Rhythm Breath

A simple choice for children who like rhythm and predictability. The breath stays smooth and even rather than becoming bigger.

IN 4

OUT 4

How to do it

- 1 Breathe in gently for 4.
- 2 Breathe out gently for 4.
- 3 Imagine the breath moving around a circle - no hard stop at the top or bottom.
- 4 Try 4-6 rounds, or stop sooner.

IF 4 FEELS TOO LONG

Try 3 in / 3 out.

IF RHYTHM FEELS GOOD

Later, you can gently experiment with 4 in / 5 out. No need to progress if equal breathing already feels comfortable.

This is deliberately softer than box breathing: no breath-holds, no corners to “get right”, just a smooth circle of breath.

08 BREATHING SPACE ORIGINAL Whisper Breath

A tiny, discreet practice for children who dislike obvious “breathing exercises”. The challenge is not to breathe more - it is to make the exhale softer.

How to do it

- 1 Breathe in gently through the nose.
- 2 On the exhale, let out the quietest possible “hhhhh...” - almost like whispering without words.
- 3 Keep the shoulders easy and the breath small enough to stay comfortable.
- 4 Try 3-5 breaths.

BREATHING SPACE CUE

“How quiet can the out-breath become?”

WHY I LIKE IT

It gives the child a focus without asking them to “calm down” or take a giant breath. It can be done almost anywhere.

If the “h” sound dries or irritates the throat, switch to a silent exhale instead.

USE IT IN REAL LIFE

Four tiny breath routines

No special mat. No perfect posture. No need to turn it into a lesson.

30-SECOND RESET

One Physiological Sigh

Normal inhale → tiny top-up → long exhale. Pause. Notice.
Repeat once only if it still feels good.

BUSY MIND

Three Humming Breaths

Easy inhale → soft hum out. Notice where the vibration
lives today.

BEFORE SLEEP

Moon + Longer-Wave

3 left-nostril breaths, then 3 gentle longer exhalations.
Keep everything small and unforced.

TRANSITION MOMENT

Alternate Nostril

3 rounds to give attention a simple left-right pattern
before moving into the next part of the day.

THE BREATHING SPACE QUESTION

“Do you feel the same, different, or not sure?”

This keeps the focus on curiosity instead of performance. “Not sure” is a completely valid answer.

The most useful practice is the one your child will actually use. Let them reject some. Let them have favourites. Let the menu become theirs.

PRINTABLE PAGE

My Breath Menu

Circle, tick or colour the ones that feel useful. Cross out the ones you dislike. This page belongs to the child.

01 Physiological Sigh

In → tiny top-up → long out

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

02 Alternate Nostril

Left → switch → right

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

03 Moon Breath

Soft breaths through the left nostril

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

04 Humming Breath

Gentle inhale → “mmmm” out

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

05 Ocean Breath

Soft whispering nasal breath

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

06 Longer-Wave

Easy in → a little longer out

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

07 Even Rhythm

Same-size inhale and exhale

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

08 Whisper Breath

Quiet “hhhh” exhale

LOVE

MAYBE

NOPE

MY EASIEST BREATH IS...

A BREATH I MIGHT USE AGAIN IS...

PARENT PAGE

Notice what helps. Leave what doesn't.

You do not need to track every breath. This is simply a place to notice patterns without turning regulation into another project.

THE BREATH WE TRIED

THE MOMENT / TIME OF DAY

CHILD CHOSE IT OR ADULT OFFERED IT?

BEFORE

AFTER: SAME / DIFFERENT / NOT SURE

WOULD WE USE IT AGAIN?

WANT THE WHOLE BREATHING SPACE FRAMEWORK?

The Parent Companion Toolkit

Breathing is only one door. The Parent Companion Toolkit helps you notice what your child may need and explore practical ideas across **Connect** · **Move** · **Breathe** · **Notice**.

CONNECT

MOVE

BREATHE

NOTICE

Currently €19

[Explore the €19 Parent Companion Toolkit →](#)

Created by The Breathing Space Project · thebreathingspaceproject.com