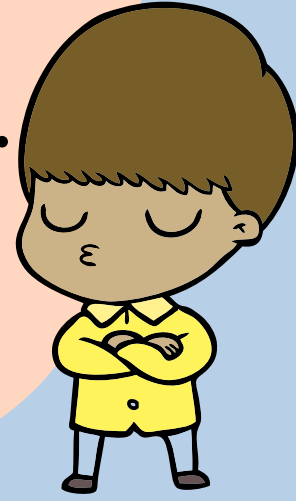


# My Toolbox of Calming Activities



We all need different techniques to try when we're feeling worried, overwhelmed or scared. Work through these activities and pick out the ones you like. Cut them out and place them in envelopes within your own toolbox.



## Exercises you can do at your table at school

### Arm Massage

Stretch out one of your arms and with your hand from your other arm, gently squeeze your arm moving up from your wrist to shoulder.



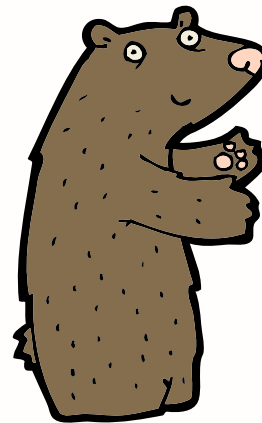
### Push Palms Together

Face your palms together like in this picture. Push your palms together and hold for 5-10 seconds.



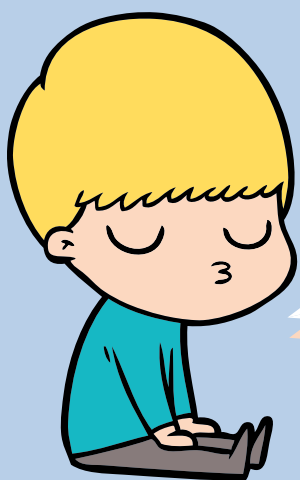
### Desk Push

Place your hands or fists on the top of your table or desk. Now push downwards and hold (not too hard!)



### Bear Hug

Wrap your hands around shoulders or knees and give yourself a big firm hug.



These short exercises are designed to help your brain have a little re-set and help us calm ourselves



# Exercises to help manage your breathing

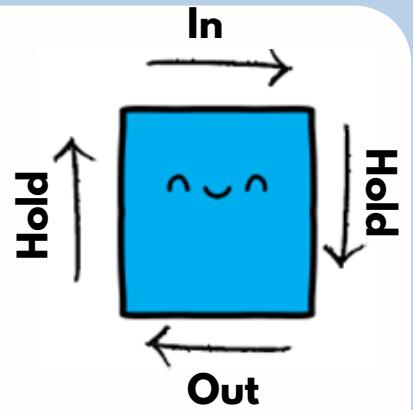
## Belly Breathing

Take a deep breath and fill your belly like you're inflating a balloon. As you do this, count 1, 2, 3, 4 to breath in and fill the balloon. Pause and then let all of the air out your belly like you're letting a balloon deflate. As you do this, count 1, 2, 3, 4 to breath out.



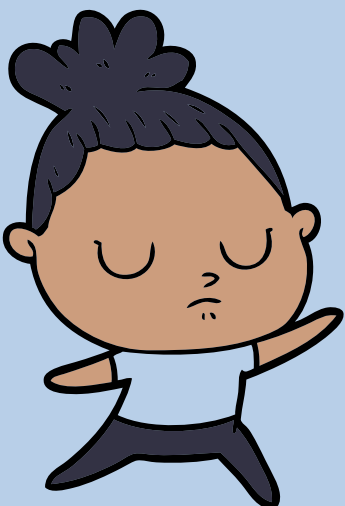
## Box Breathing

Imagine you are drawing a square, trace the square on your duvet. Breath in while counting 1, 2, 3, 4 as you draw the top line then pause. Breathe out while counting 1, 2, 3, 4 as you draw the line down the side and then pause. Carry this on around the square, breathing in/out along the straights and pausing at each corner.



## Finger Breathing

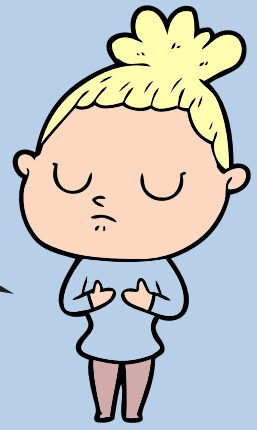
Use your index finger to trace around the edges of the fingers on your opposite hand. Count 1, 2, 3, 4 and breath in as you go up the first finger. Count 1, 2, 3, 4 as breath out as your go down the finger. Repeat this for each finger breathing and counting each time.



Sometimes when we feel overwhelmed we experience physical changes in our bodies. Breathing exercises can help us to manage these.

# Exercises to help ground you in your environment

These exercises help by getting you to think about the environment around you.



## Activate Your Senses

Take notice of your senses, name:

5 things you can see

4 things you have feel or touch

3 things you can hear

2 things you can smell  
(or like the smell of)

1 thing you can taste  
(or like to taste)



## Facts About Me

Think about and name factors about what is going on right now. For example think:

My name is...

My age is...

I am wearing...

The weather is...

My favourite colour is...



## Room Search

Think of a category and search the room for it.

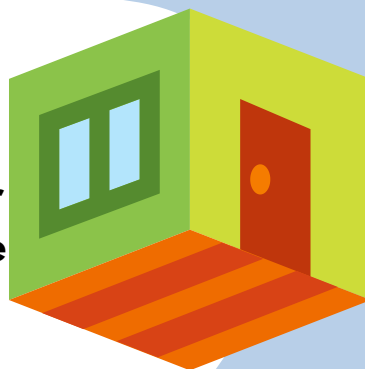
For example, look for:

Everything that is a... colour

Everything that is a... shape

Things that feel of...

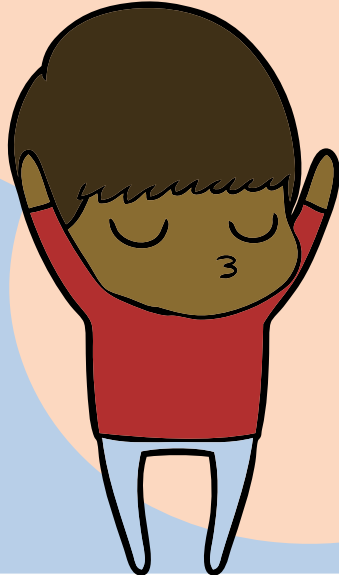
Things made of...



## Top tip

It's helpful to practice these exercises when you're not worried first!





**Meditation and mindfulness are ways to help us feel calmer, and are great ways to deal with big or complicated feelings. Lots of people use these everyday. They are great ways to feel peaceful and calm.**

## **Introducing meditation** **and mindfulness**

### **Meditation**

**Set a timer for five minutes, or choose a relaxing song to listen to, whilst you sit comfortably and close your eyes. Think about your breathing, how each breath in feels, and then how your breath out feels. Don't hold your breath but try to slowly breathe in through your nose, then slowly out through your nose. The idea is that if you focus on the sound and feeling of your breath going in and out of your nose your brain doesn't have time to think about other stuff. When the time goes off or the music finishes, open your eyes slowly.**



### **Top Tip**

**If other thoughts come into your mind, don't worry, just bring your thoughts back to your breath**

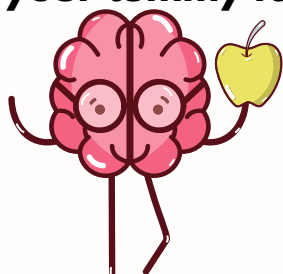
### **Body scanning**

**Sit comfortably and focus on each of your body parts, one at a time. Go through how they feel when you move them, starting with your toes.**



### **Mindful eating**

**When you're eating, try to notice all the flavours and textures you taste and feel them on your tongue. Notice how your tummy feels.**



### **Feel the ground**

**Stand barefoot and concentrate on the ground under your feet. Can you feel its texture? Is it warm or cold? Soft or hard?**





**These exercises aim to help you feel more relaxed**

## Exercises to help you feel relaxed

### **Progressive Muscle Relaxation**



Starting with your toes clench your muscles really tightly for 5 seconds. Then let go gradually (over the course of about 15 seconds), breathing slowly and concentrating on the feeling in your toes. Then do the same thing with your entire foot. When that's complete, move on to your calves, thighs, and slowly moving all the way up your body to your face. Some people prefer to listen to guided progressive muscle relaxation on YouTube.

### **Visualisation**

Try to picture a picture, a scene, a memory which is pleasant and makes you feel safe. Focus entirely on this scene, thinking about all five of your senses.

Ask yourself, what can I see here? What can I hear? What can I smell? What can I touch? What can I taste?



Choose the activities that suit you best to put in your own toolbox



**Write down your  
favourite ideas (or  
different ones here!)**



**Ideas for my toolbox of activities**