

A Mind-Body Approach to Stress Management and Emotional Regulation

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CALMING PRACTICES

- Simply breath
 - Take 30 seconds to several minutes to just consciously breath and know that you're breathing
 - Feel the sensation of your breath (in nostrils, how it touches ribs with inhale, how belly falls with exhale)
 - Double your exhale for sense of calm (inhale count of 4-5, exhale count of 8-10)
 - Square breath (inhale count of 4, pause at top of inhale, exhale count of 4, pause at end of exhale)
 - Slow your breathing and breath consciously when you're with a consumer
 - Take a conscious exhale to let go
 - Take your arms overhead if you're griping in the gut to get a bigger, fuller breath

- Softening the jaw
 - Gently soften the inside of the mouth, letting the tongue and muscles around the mouth relax
 - Lips together, teeth apart
 - Notice the ease it brings to the body
 - Breathe into that sensation of relief

- Softening the shoulders
 - Take your shoulders up toward your ears
 - Slowly, gently let them lower away from your ears, making space between bottom of ear and top of shoulder with arms at your side
 - Broaden across the collar bones (from center of heart to edge of inner shoulder)
 - Lengthen the spine, balance head over neck and shoulders

- Calming the Brain
 - Lightly press the heel of your hand on the center of your forehead, placing it just above the brow line
 - Close your eyes as you gently draw the skin of the forehead down
 - Hold for a few breaths, then release

- Taking Support from the Space Around You (Boundary)
 - Boundary is useful in calming or stabilizing the mind
 - Feel the seat of the chair as you sit. Release your weight into the chair
 - Feel your feet as a way to create grounding and boundary
 - Learn to 'land' during the course of your day (Arms & legs wide against wall or on floor, legs up the wall, breathe)
 - Sit or stand back to back with a co-worker, family member or friend
 - Breathe into relief

INVIGORATING PRACTICES

- Taking Arms and Legs Wide (Expansion)
 - Take your legs 3½ - 4 feet apart, turning the feet so they are pointing straight ahead
 - Broaden across the collarbones as you take your arms out to the sides to shoulder level.
Drop the shoulder blades down the back
 - Lengthen from your hips to knees to feet
 - Lengthen from the center of your heart to elbows to wrists
 - Breathe
 - Feel your joints in space - your ankles, knees, and hips; your shoulders, elbows and wrists
 - Get bigger in space. Breathe!

- Office Downward Dog
 - Stand facing a desk or chair with feet hip width apart
 - Place your hands on the desktop shoulder width apart, broadening the palms and extending through the fingers
 - Step back, keeping feet hip width apart until the spine is parallel to the floor
 - Broaden across the back of the thighs and lift the kneecaps
 - Feel the length in the spine. Breathe
 - Slowly step forward and release

- Chair sun salutations
 - Sit at the edge of your chair. Place your feet directly below your knees
 - Inhale draw your arms overhead
 - Exhale taking the arms wide, forward fold (let spine curl, head hang)
 - Inhale, lengthen/flatten the back, head in line with spine
 - Exhale, forward fold
 - Inhale, ground the feet, take arms overhead
 - Exhale, palms together draw to heart center

- Grounding Hands and Feet (Both grounding and invigorating)
 - Sit at the edge of your chair, facing a table. Place your feet directly below your knees
 - Bring your hands to the table, shoulder width apart, palms facing down
 - Press the center of your palms into the table and stretch out through the fingers
 - Move the shoulder blades into the body and down toward the tailbone
 - Press down through the inner edges of your heels, feel your hands and breathe
 - Feel the lightness in your spine. Breathe

- Waking Up the Spine
 - Sit at the edge of your chair, feet pointing straight ahead
 - Ground and feel your feet in contact with the ground
 - Wiggle your toes
 - Inhale, lengthen through the spine
 - Balance the head over the neck and shoulders
 - Add rhythm/movement by exhaling and curling the spine, inhaling and lengthening
 - Soften the jaw
 - Smile, breathe

SCENARIOS

Being with someone who's angry/frustrated

You may need to let this person vent. As that is happening here's some ideas you may want to try:

- Feel your feet, ground through your heels, lift your heart, wiggle your toes, ground your hands – find easily accessible sources of grounding in your body
- Take support from the space around you – feel your feet on the floor, the back of your chair, your seat on the chair, the wall or hands on your desk
- Slow your breathing

After the person has vented:

- Draw attention to your feet
- Soften your jaw, your eyes, your breath
- Calm the brain (hand to the forehead)
- Let it work through your body to shake it off
 - Office down dog
 - Chair sun salutations
 - Stand with arms and legs wide and get bigger in space
 - Feel your feet as you walk or take off shoes, wiggle toes, feel the earth
 - Use your exhale to let go of the energy
 - Slowly rock side to side
 - Shake your body either standing or sitting

Anxiety

- Use props and walls to create boundary
 - Sandbag, rice bag, pillows, blankets, etc on lap or feet
 - Pet or child on lap
 - Stand or lean against a wall
 - Lay on the floor with arms and legs wide
 - Calm the brain
 - Ground hands on thighs or table and feet on floor
 - Sit or stand back to back -- can add rhythm by rocking

Pain

- Use props to create boundary
- Calm the brain
- Sit back to back
- Create rhythm

Delivering bad news

- Before and during delivering bad news
 - Ground your feet, lift your sternum, lengthen through the spine and get tall
 - Office down dog
 - Ground your hands on the desk or your thighs
 - Soften your jaw (lips together, teeth apart)

SCENARIOS CONTINUED

After delivering bad news

- Draw attention to your feet
- Soften your jaw, your eyes, your breath
- Calm the brain (hand to the forehead)
- Let it work through your body to shake it off
 - Office down dog
 - Chair sun salutations
 - Stand with arms and legs wide and get bigger in space
 - Feel your feet as you walk or take off shoes, wiggle toes, feel the earth
 - Use your exhale to let go of the energy
 - Slowly rick side to side

In General

- Practice when not under stress so you can use these practices in times of stress
- Find mind-body practices that resonate with you and practice them. Start with just a few
 - Use your short pauses and few minutes of downtime to restore
 - Take off your shoes and/or ground your feet
 - Office down dog
 - Sitting or standing back to back with a family member, friend or co-worker
 - Arms and legs wide (standing or on floor)
 - Soften the jaw (lips together, teeth apart)
 - Slow, conscious breathing