

Deep Breathing Instructions

“When we’re mad usually we breathe fast and shallow, like a dog panting (exaggerate fast, shallow breathing with an angry face, so it’s funny). Deep breathing is slow and deep and it lowers our emotional temperature. It’s often used by basketball players at the free-throw line or baseball players if they’re being heckled”

1. Turn off or dim lights if possible. “Let’s try it. We’re going to breathe from our stomachs, so put your hand on your stomach. Take a very slow, deep breath, so deep that you can see your stomach rise with your breath. Now slowly let out your breath and watch your stomach fall. Watching your stomach is a good way to make sure you’re taking deep breaths”
2. “A good way to make sure you’re taking deep breaths is to count. Each breath in should take four counts and each breath out another four counts. Keep your hand on your stomach and let your breath follow my count: Breathe in, one, two, three, four. Breathe out, one, two, three, four. (Repeat this about 10 times). Think about nothing but breathing, let it flow in and out of your body”.
3. Ask students how that felt and if they had any problems with the deep breathing. Suggest that they try using deep breathing this week at least twice when they feel their temperature rising.

Muscle Relaxation

“Another way to relax when you’re having lots of angry body feelings is through relaxing your muscles. Let’s try it now. I’d like everyone to face toward the wall and get in a comfortable reclining or sitting position.”

1. Loosen any tight clothing.
2. Tense your toes and feet. Hold the tension, study the tension, and relax.
3. Tense your lower legs, knees and thighs. Hold the tension. Study the tension, then relax.
4. Tense your fingers and hands. Hold and study the tension, then relax.
5. Tense your lower arms, elbows, and upper arms. Hold it, study it, relax.
6. Tense your stomach, hold the tension, feel the tension, relax.
7. Tense your chest. Hold and study the tension. Relax. Take a deep breath and exhale slowly.
8. Tense your lower back. Hold and study the tension and relax.
9. Tense your upper back. Hold and study the tension, and relax.
10. Tense your shoulders. Hold and study the tension. Relax.
11. Tense both the back and front of your neck. Hold the tension, study the tension, relax.
12. Tense your entire head. Make a grimace on your face so that you feel the tension in your facial muscles. Study the tension, relax.
13. Now try to tense every muscle in your body. Hold it, study it, relax.
14. Continue sitting or reclining for a few minutes, feeling the relaxation flowing through your body. Know the difference between muscles that are tense and muscles that are relaxed.
15. Now stretch, feeling renewed and refreshed.