



Okay, let's start with some gentle, short, breathing exercises.

This week we are going to practise a simple breathing exercise that we can use with children that will help them regulate their breathing. If we can regulate the breathing then we can slow down the entire system and this leads to a feeling of calm and balance.

Ideally with children and young people, we want things to be short meditations and techniques that they can use, and get results from quickly.

They do not have the commitment that, say, an adult who has chosen to take up meditation may have. They need something

that demonstrates visible results in order to be inspired to stick to it.

So, this week we are going to take a breath work meditation, and adapt it for the different age groups.

Breath work is great because it can be practised without the need for spoken meditation or listening to something, so kids of all ages can go off to a quiet spot and do this in the middle of their busy day.

Birthday Cake Breathwork Meditation.

Imagine that in front of you, there is a nice birthday cake. It can be whatever kind of cake you want it to be (when adapting this to use with kids you would maybe elicit a cake from them, as a group creates it, i.e chocolate, and it has sprinkles on it).

The cake has lots of lovely candles on it, and they need blowing out, but oh look, the cake looks delicious, I bet it tastes amazing, I wonder what it smells like?

*Smell the cake (deep breath in through the nose)
And blow out the candles (bg exhale through the mouth. With lips pursed as you would if you were blowing out the candles).*

You repeat this three times, and on the last breath you finally manage to blow out all of the candles.

This of course can be adapted to use with different age groups, with older kids you may not engage so much in creating the cake, just tell them to imagine a cake and let them go and do this on their own, with clear instruction from you of simply

'smell the cake'..... 'Blow out the candles'. You may also want to add in counting with older kids, smell the cake, 2,3,4,5,6,7 and blow out the candles, 2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11.

Breathing in the light

Another great little meditation technique that can be adapted to all age groups is the breathing in the light meditation.

Close your eyes, imagine a bright white light is all around, a white healing light, and breathe in the light...

Take a nice big deep breath in... breathe into your belly...

And fill it as much as you can with this bright healing light...

Breathing in and out...

Just keep breathing in that white light and allow it to relax every single muscle, and every single bone in your body...

You can do this whenever you want to, it will relax you and wash away any stress, or tension.

Note: Adapt this to your age group, younger kids may not understand the concept of the word healing so replace it perhaps with magic energy.

Brushing hair - morning routine

One of the most effective ways to teach kids of all ages fast and easy to do meditation and mindful techniques, is to turn an every day routine that they already have into a mood enhancing ritual.

By adding the technique onto something that they will do everyday anyway, it is easier to remember to do it, but also, to create a new daily habit. By doing it for 28 days in a row, the brain creates a new habit, and if done over an 8 week period, new neural pathways are created in the brain and the habit becomes a long term habit.

Brushing hair

As the child/ren brushes their hair, they can count each brush stroke, in nice slow counts, that mirror their breathing.

So, breathe in.... Brush....

Breathe out.... Brush

Then add on a number to count to for each in and out breath for example:

Breathe in for 4, brush, breathe out for 4, brush.

This helps a child to instantly balance themselves and regulate their emotions, and can be adapted in difficulty for each age group.