



Relaxed Breathing

Taking deep breaths is a way we can calm our bodies when we have big feelings. Relaxed breathing helps our bodies and our brains slow down. As our bodies calm, our uncomfortable feelings get smaller making it easier to make good choices. Relaxed breathing is a special kind of breathing that takes practice. Practicing a few minutes each day makes it easier to use when our feelings are big and strong.

Let's try it out!

Get a grown-up to read the next part to you. Grown-ups should read each line slowly and pause for a moment after each line. This type of breathing takes some practice, so you might not feel more relaxed the first few times you try it out.



Find a comfortable place to sit or lie down so that your arms and legs can rest but are not crossed.



You can close your eyes if that feels nice for you, but you do not have to.



Notice how it feels to be in your body right now. You can count to see how long each breath in and breath out is today.



Then, if you can, try to breathe in and out through your nose. This helps your breathing become a little slower. (If you cannot breathe through your nose because it is stuffed, that is okay. You can still practice relaxed breathing.)

5

Now see if you can make your breathing slow down a little bit. Do not hold your breath. Just see if you can make the count for your breath out one second longer. Your next breath in will naturally be longer too.

6

When you breathe in, see if you can breathe all the way into your belly. If you do this, you will be able to feel your belly get bigger as it fills with air; like a balloon. If you like, you can put your hand or a stuffed friend on your belly to feel or see it move. It will go up or out as you breathe in and down or in as you breathe out.

7

Watch or feel your belly move as you breathe for a few breaths.

8

If it feels good, see if you can make the count for your breath out one second longer.

9

Keep noticing how it feels to breathe like this.

