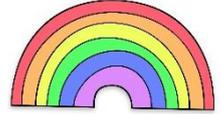


MEDITATION EXERCISES

Rainbow



Close your eyes. Be very still. And imagine in front of you is the most beautiful rainbow. Have a good look and see all the spectacular colours of the rainbow. You see red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The colours are twinkling in the light. It is almost as if the rainbow is transparent. You have never seen such a colourful rainbow. It makes you feel so joyful and light just by looking at it. Stay there for a few moments and enjoy this feeling of lightness. Now, you decide to climb the rainbow. It is made of thousands and thousands of tiny lights. All different colours. As you take each step and your foot touches the rainbow light, your whole body is filled with energy. As you carefully climb, one foot in front of the other, you feel full of excitement and anticipation. Where does the sparkling rainbow lead? Finally, you reach the top and can see for miles and miles. The view is spectacular. What can you see? Now, you decide to slide down the other side of the rainbow. It feels such fun. This is the biggest slide in the world. Enjoy this wonderful feeling as you whizz down the rainbow. Finally, you reach the bottom of the rainbow. What can you see on this side? Has the rainbow taken you into another magical rainbow world? What can you see? Is there a pot of gold waiting for you? Spend a few moments enjoying this colourful world at the end of the rainbow. Relaxing on the beach, close your eyes. Be very still and imagine you are lying down on the beach. Feel the warm sand under your body. You can hear the waves of the sea. Now, very gently, you are going to relax each part of your body. Start with your feet. Let your toes completely relax and become soft. Squeeze your legs and gently let them go. Feel all the tension in your legs releasing as they become relaxed and soft. Squeeze the muscles in your tummy and let go completely. Stretch your back as long as you can. And relax. Can you feel your back sinking into the sand? Now, squeeze your shoulders up to your ears and let them relax and become soft. Let all the tension melt away. Squeeze your arms as tight as you can and let them go. Allow your arms to feel heavy as they sink into the sand. Squeeze your fingers into a tight fist and now uncurl them slowly and rest them softly on the golden sand. Scrunch your face into a tiny ball. Squeeze and squeeze and let go. And relax. Let your head completely relax. Relax your eyes. Relax your ears. Relax your cheeks. Relax your forehead. Become completely still and relaxed. Feel the warm sun on your face and body as you sink down further into the powdery sand. As you lie there, listen to the waves and see if you can breathe in and out like the waves. Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe out. Stay there for as long as you like. Enjoying the feeling of being completely relaxed.

Stars in the Sky



Close your eyes. Be very still. And imagine it is night-time and the sky is a midnight blue. It is decorated with thousands of twinkling lights. Each one has its own brilliance and shines in its own unique way. Lighting up the sky and making it look so beautiful. Now, see if you can turn into a tiny star. Be very still and concentrate. And see yourself as a tiny star in the middle of your head. You just need to have one thought, "I am a star." And you become a tiny little star of light. Very gently you start to drift up towards other twinkling stars. It feels as if you are being lifted. You feel so light and free. Keep saying to yourself, "I am light. I am light. I am a star. I am a star. I am a star of light. I am a star of light." And you feel yourself getting lighter and lighter and drifting up into the sky. Up and up you go. Further and further into the sky. Until finally, you are sitting next to thousands of radiant, shining stars. All the stars are twinkling in the deep blue sky. Making it look brilliant. You feel very comfortable sitting next to your star friends. Can you shine as brightly as them? Have a try. Be very, very still. And just think of light. Fill your mind with light. Just keep saying to yourself, "I am light. I am light. I am a star of light. I am a star of

light.” And watch how you sparkle like the brightest star in the sky. Stay there, shining for as long as you wish. Until you are ready to twinkle back to earth.

Treasure



Close your eyes. Be very still. And imagine that you are on an island. This is Treasure Island and somewhere hidden on the island is a chest filled with treasure. It is time for you to go on an adventure to find this hidden treasure. You have to climb mountains, swim through streams and lakes, go through dark caves. Keep looking until you find the treasure. Where did you find it? Did you have to dig deep in the sand to find the treasure? Or was it hiding in a cave? Or behind a bush? You open the chest and see that it is filled with golden treasure. You see glittering jewels and pearls gleaming in the hot sun. You see gold and silver plates, goblets, and jewel incrustated ornaments. Take a closer look and see that there is something even more special about this treasure. Each item has word written on it: love, peace, happiness, joy. Pick up a diamond with the word peace written on it. How does peace feel? Stay very still and feel peace. Repeat to yourself, “I am peaceful. I am peaceful. I am peaceful.” Now, take a ruby with the word love written on it. How does love feel? Stay very still and feel love. “I am love. I am loving. I am love. I am loving. I am love. I am loving.” Pick up a sparkly gold chain with the word happiness written on it. How does happiness feel? Stay very still and feel happiness. You have all these special qualities hidden inside you like treasure. You just have to think about them and they will be revealed on your face and in your actions. Stay there for as long as you can. Full of peace, love, and happiness. Repeat to yourself, “I am peaceful. I am loving. And I am happy. I am peaceful. I am loving. And I am happy.”

Floating on the River



Close your eyes. Be very still. And imagine you are in a small boat, drifting down the river. Lie back in the wooden boat and allow the soft breeze and river currents to gently move you along. As you lie there, let your whole body be completely still. You can feel the softness of the sunshine on your skin. You can hear the birds singing quietly and the water rippling gently. You feel totally content and serene. There is no place you would rather be at this moment. As you lie there, let all the muscle in your body relax. The smooth swaying motion of the boat to take you deeper and deeper into a feeling of relaxation. Let your feet relax as your drift along. Let your legs relax. Let your stomach relax. Let your chest relax. Let your arms relax. Let your hands relax. And let your head relax. And now, very gently, take in a deep breath. Fill your lungs with fresh country air. And breathe out very slowly. Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out. As you breathe in and out, feel yourself sinking into deep relaxation. Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out. Enjoy the feeling of the boat swaying from side to side as the sun shines on your body. You feel warm and relaxed all over. There is nothing that is more important than this moment than just enjoying this feeling of deep relaxation. You feel so happy feeling relaxed as you enjoy drifting down the river.

Breathing - Ways to Teach Children to Breathe

The diaphragm is a big sheet of muscle that separates the lower part of our tummies and our chest. When we breathe in, our diaphragm presses down-making space for our lungs to fill up with air. Please note, in all breathing exercises, we breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth unless otherwise state. The slower the outbreath the more relaxed children will feel. Breathing Exercises (Repeat each exercise 2 –3 times)

Underwater breathing

You are going to hold your breath under water. Breathe in, hold your nose, puff out your cheeks, and hold for a count of three. Blow out very slowly and smoothly. Repeat this exercise 2 or 3 times. Train breathing-Take in a deep breath and as you breathe out make a chugging noise like a train.



Birthday candles-Imagine you are blowing out candles on your birthday cake. Take in a deep breath and blow out the candles with little sharp breaths-one breath for each candle. See if you notice the muscles just above your tummy moving as you blow out.

Long breaths

Take in a deep breath, put your lips together to make a small O, and let out a soft, slow and steady breath. See if you can blow out all the old air in your lungs. Now take in a deep breath, filling your lungs with new, fresh air.



Blowing-Imagine you are blowing up a balloon. Take in a deep breath, and steadily and slowly blow up your huge balloon. See the balloon getting bigger, and bigger, and bigger. Now close your eyes and imagine the balloon floating into the air. As you stand there, feel yourself becoming very quiet and peaceful. You can blow up the balloon, fill it with cross thoughts, put it on the floor and stamp on it. Now take in a deep breath and imagine you are letting the balloon go. Hiss all the air out of the balloon.

Enormous sighs

Take in a deep breath, and let out a big sigh as you let the air out. See how noisy you can make your sighs. See who can make the noisiest sigh. Bags of air-Imagine your lungs are two bags. Take in a slow breath and imagine you are filling the bags with fresh, clean air. Hold your breath for a count of three, and see if you can keep you air bags full. Now breathe out very slowly. Squeeze and relax-Take in a deep breath, and as you breathe in, squeeze all the muscles in your body. Now breathe out and relax all the muscles in your body (good for when the children are lying down).



Feathers

Imagine you are blowing feathers into the room. Take in a deep breath, and as you breathe out, blow feathers softly into the air. Enjoy playing with the feathers as they dance in the air. See how high and far you can blow the feathers. See if you can make the feathers dance in the air with your breath. Paper cut-outs-Adults or children can cut out paper shapes (leaf, heart, star, and butterfly). They can be placed on the children's stomach as they breathe in and out. You could also make tissue paper butterflies and let children blow on them.



Alternate nostril breathing

Hold one side of your nose and breathe in and out from the other side. Alternate sides. Place your thumb on your right nostril and fourth finger on left nostril. Close the right and breathe through the left. Close the left and breathe out through the right.



Deep breaths

Take in a deep breath. Breathe in for a count of four, hold for a count of four and breathe out for a count of eight. Repeat this 4 times.



Tummy breaths

Imagine you are breathing into your tummy. Lie down and put your hand on your tummy, and as you take in a deep breath, feel your tummy rising upwards. As you breathe out, feel your tummy falling. Continue with tummy breaths and notice how you feel more and more relaxed and peaceful.



Farm animal breaths

Take in a big breath, and breathe out saying, “moo”, “bahh”, and “neigh”.



Dragon breathing

Take in a deep breath and blow out slowly like a fiery dragon.



Snake breaths

Take in a big breath, and as you breathe out, make a long hiss like a snake. How long can you make your hiss?

Bee breaths-Take in a big breath, and as you breathe out, put your lips together and very softly buzz like a bee.



Rocking the teddy

Lie on your back and place a teddy on your tummy. As you breathe in and out, watch the teddy rock from side to side.



Five finger breathing

Hold up your left hand. Using your right index finger, trace up the outside of your left little finger. Breathe in whilst you do this. When you get to the top of your little finger, trace down the inside and breathe out. Repeat this with each finger in turn until you have traced up and down each one, taking five big, deep breaths.

