

Care for The Caregiver March 1, 2021

Parent Handout #2



Spend some time outdoors each day, if only for a 5 minute walk . Time outdoors is restorative and helps to reduce stress. Try a walking meditation or walk to the rhythm of music.

Strategies for Self Care -

This month we focus on “ 5 minutes for Me”. It is important to remember to spend a few minutes each day on self care so we can be the best we can be for ourselves and our families. Lets begin with some simple **Breathing Exercises...**

One resource we always have with us is our breath. It is physically impossible to be “stressed” and to be deep breathing in and out at the same time. By paying attention and consciously changing your breathing pattern in a very specific way, you can create a shift in your energy, mood and alertness from “Stress mode” into “Thrive mode”.

Begin by just paying attention to your breath. Is your breathing short and shallow? Are you a fast breather? Ahhh...a sign of stress.

To begin to reduce your stress through breathing, start with these simple steps:

Always make sure your OUT breath is LONGER than your IN Breath. Practice a guided breathing exercise to regulate your breathing pattern. The goal is 6-8 breaths per minute.

Join us on **The Get Ready At Home Parent Guide # 2** to follow the timing of this breathing exercise.

Breathe in 1—2—3—4—

Breathe Out 1—2—3—4—5—

Set the timer on your phone- start with repeating this breathing pattern for 3 minutes and work up to 5 or 10. The goal is to establish a rhythm, count the breaths and **make the exhale one count longer than the inhale.**



Inhale the
future, exhale
the past.

You can do this anywhere. Online at the grocery store, walking to the bus, taking a hike or doing the dishes. Stop, focus and breathe truly the fastest way to get to a better place.

Our 2nd breathing exercise uses **positive words** to direct the breath. This practice is a mindfulness breathing exercise. A sample of the practice...

I breathe in peace.....

I breathe out peace.....

I breathe in calm.....

I breathe out calm.....

Continue the in and out of the mindful breathing, adding the words:

Kindness
compassion
Joy
Friendship
Caring
Love

Practice along with us on our 5 minute recorded tutorial until you have the rhythm and then use your own positive words to guide the rhythm of your breath. Notice how you feel afterwards.

Check out another favorite online resource for breathing exercises and simple meditation:

fragrantheart.com A free website that offers a multitude of options for guided breathing and meditation practices. Check them out.

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