



BREATHING WITH THE BODY SYSTEMS

The Body Mind Centering® principle of layering through the body systems is utilized here.

- Give cues to breathe into the abdomen and organs.
- Bring awareness to the three-part breath.
- Notice how the breath moves through all three areas of the lower abdomen, lower lungs and chest as you inhale and exhale.
- Notice the skin and the layers under the skin.
- Notice the muscle and fascia.
- Notice the bones and the fluids flowing within the body as you breathe gently.
- Notice all the cells that make up the body.
- While lying supine, notice your spine and the relationship of your head and tail or the sacrum down to the coccyx bone.
- Notice the pelvic halves on each side.
- Place your hands on your hips and feel the large bones.
- Feel the ribcage and notice it is the outer container for the lungs and organs.

GUIDED IMAGERY: THE FLOATING RAFT

These directions are for the person who is guiding the imagery exercise.

- Invite the children or adult to imagine they are floating on a raft.
- Describe the color of the water, the gentle rocking movements, the sun on the face, the smells and the wind.
- Use evocative and sensory rich language, words such as yielding, floating, and melting into the earth.
- Suggest that they let the back of the body yield into the floor as they lie on their mat. Yielding is like a melting sensation; letting the weight of their body go.
- Suggest they imagine the wind blowing against them as they travel in the raft.
- Ask them to explore the beautiful scenery, such as green covered mountains and blue sky, and enjoy the gentle rocking of the raft as they float.
- Suggest that the raft returns to the edge of the land and it is time to get out and start walking home.

TRACE THE BONES OF THE FOOT

Tracing bones is done by feeling the bones with our fingers, and following the bone to where it begins and ends.

- Find the large and small bones of the foot without worrying about the names.
- Feel which ones are very big and very small.
- Move the foot and stretch the toes.
- Notice the different parts of the foot and how the bones move.
- Take the time to feel the bones of the foot.
- Stand up and walk around.
- Ask yourself which bones hit the floor first or second.
- Notice if the weight is on the left side or the right.
- Observe if your heel or toe side is more active.
- Sense if both legs feel the same when you walk
- Stop and trace the bones again.
- Notice if anything feels different

TAP THE BONES FOR QUICK FOCUS: THE STERNUM AND THE MANUBRIUM

For a quick focusing activity, have the child tap on the manubrium, the broad upper part of the sternum. The sternum is the big bone that the ribs attach to on the front surface of the body. Start by finding the soft hollow part of the throat. Feel the manubrium, the bone at the top of the sternum at the level of the clavicle (the collar bone which is on top of the first rib). Children and adults will be amazed how hard this bone is. Tapping is also a way of awakening the senses because the thymus gland is in this area. Tuning into the skeletal system is a simple activity to help children see how quickly the mind can cease from wandering. Each tap gives a proprioceptive jolt and wake up call to our mind and body. This allows us to feel the structure the bones provide us and come into the present moment. It supports our thoughts to become grounded through the sense of the layers of the bones. It can teach us to focus as we bring our awareness back to the large bones.

THE FLYING CAR

- Imagine riding in an open car through the sky.
- See yourself laughing and having fun.
- Hold on tight to keep from falling.
- Feel the bumpy ride as you move up and down, left and right.
- Focus on the breath as you inhale and exhale.
- Imagine the car is your breath keeping you safe.
- Hold tight to the car and let go of each thought as it arises.
- Watch the thoughts pass into the distance just as the objects you see below pass away as you drive by.
- Enjoy sitting in the stillness as you go deeper on the journey.



Mindfulness & Yoga Skills for Children and Adolescents: 115 Activities for Trauma, Self-Regulation, Special Needs & Anxiety

New and unique exercises in yoga, meditation, guided imagery and somatic explorations fill this comprehensive skills guide. This book is brimming with 115 practical and easy to use tools and stories supporting critical life skills for families, classrooms and therapy sessions.