

3 Breathing Strategies to Help Bring on the Calm

There are multiple breathing strategies available to you and your child to help bring on the calm.

Gentle reminder: a panic attack or a time when your child is really struggling is not the time to ask your child to breathe - you're going to want to practice these techniques during moments of calm with your child and then when your child starts to struggle, YOU must do these breathing exercises and most times your child will begin mirroring you without even knowing they're doing it.

With breathing techniques - practice during calm is critical to success.

Here are 3 strategies to try:

The 4-7-8 technique:

Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of **4**. Hold your **breath** for a count of **7**. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **8**.

Square breathing:

Square breathing is a type of breathwork that can shift your energy, connect you more deeply with your body, calm your nervous system, and decrease stress in your body. It is also referred to as box breathing, 4x4 breathing, and 4-part breath.

Begin by slowly exhaling all of your air out. Then, gently inhale through your nose to a slow count of 4. Hold at the top of the breath for a count of 4. Then gently exhale through your mouth for a count of 4. At the bottom of the breath, pause and hold for the count of 4.

2-Syllable breathing:

Ask your child to think of one two-syllable word or two one-syllable words that bring them calm and joy. For example, one child chose the word "Mommy" and another chose the word "sunshine". Both are two syllables.

Ask your child to think of the word in their head. Allow the calm to settle. Ask your child to inhale while they think of the first syllable and exhale as they think of the second syllable. Each inhale and exhale should be for a minimum for five seconds. Repeat for 2 minutes.