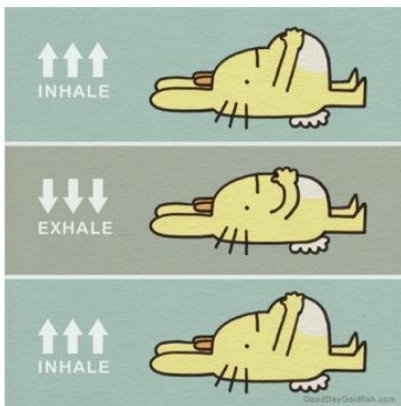


Self-care During Times of Stress

Activities for Families
Sarah Gigante, PT, DPT, RYT-200

Healthy Ways to Combat Stress Every Day:

- ✚ Play outside to breathe fresh air
- ✚ Drink water
- ✚ Go for a walk, run, or light jog
- ✚ Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables
- ✚ Laugh EVERY day
- ✚ Keep a journal
- ✚ Stop over-thinking, using add-ons, or self-judgement
- ✚ Take a break, BREATHE, return
- ✚ Use aromatherapy (Eucalyptus, Cloves, Tea Tree)
- ✚ Do Yoga – (including poses, deep relaxation and meditation)
- ✚ Get enough sleep



Belly Breathing:

- ✚ Belly Breathing triggers your vagus nerve to activate calming centers in the brain. It shuts down the “fight or flight” response allowing us to use the executive functioning portion of our brain.
- ✚ A calm brain is a brain that can learn and use logic.
- ✚ When you inhale your belly should get bigger and when you exhale your belly should get smaller.

Practice makes peaceful!

Yoga Ideas for Stress Relief:

Chair Yoga Poses:

Hold each one pose 3 to 5 slow breaths before moving to the next one.



Begin sitting in a chair with your feet planted firmly on the floor, back straight. Place your hands on your knees and on an inhale drop your head back, pull your chest up and forward for a slight backbend.



On an exhale from cow pose, round your back and draw your belly in. Gently tuck your chin in towards your chest and expand the area between your shoulder blades. Draw your belly in towards your spine, and up towards your ribs.



Shift forward in your chair so that you're seated on the edge. Stretch your legs out in front of you with your heels resting on the floor, and your toes pointing up towards the ceiling. On an exhale, place your hands on your knees, shins, or grabbing your toe – whatever is most comfortable for you. Keep your heart reaching strongly towards your feet and your gaze straight ahead.



Sitting with your feet firmly planted on the floor and a straight back, place your ankle on your opposite knee. You should feel a really good stretch in your right hip. If you want to go deeper, on an exhale, slowly lean forward from your hips. Keep your heart reaching forward and gaze straight ahead. Don't forget to do the other side!



From your seated position, place your hand on the chair seat next to you and lift your other hand up towards the ceiling. On an exhale, turn your gaze focused down towards the floor and lean your torso over to the left. Keeping your right arm by your ear, reach it strongly away from your body. Don't forget to stretch the other side!



Beginning in your seated position, place your left hand on the chair seat behind you and your right hand on the outside of your left knee. On an inhale, reach your head up strongly towards the ceiling and on an exhale, gently turn your shoulders to the left. To help deepen your twist, gently press your right hand against your knee. Repeat on the other side.

Deep Relaxation: Body Relaxation for Kids – (<https://youtu.be/cDKyRpW-Yuc>)

Meditation:

Healing Mantra: "Ra Ma Da Sa, Sa Say So Hung"

A beautiful version by Snatam Kaur can be found on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kYivP3gedCo>

Posture: Sit in Easy Pose (on the floor, with legs crossed) or in a chair with feet planted firmly on the ground, with the spine straight and your eyes closed. Hold your elbows at your sides with your palms facing upwards.

