

## choose your breathing anchor

We pay attention to the feeling of breathing where we notice it most—near our nose, chest, or belly—to help us relax and focus on the present moment.

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**LIFE SKILLS**



**DURATION** 1 to 15 minutes

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**SUPPLIES** Optional: cushion for sitting on

**AGE** All ages

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### LEADING THE GAME

1. Sit with your back straight and your body relaxed, resting your hands gently on your knees, and close your eyes if you're comfortable doing so. Notice what it feels like to breathe in and out right now.
2. Now put one finger under your nose and feel your breath going in and out. Can you feel it?
3. Next, place your hand on your chest, over your heart. Can you feel your hand moving when you breathe?
4. Now place your hand on your belly and feel the movement of your breathing there.
5. Put your hands back on your knees and breathe naturally. Notice where you feel the movement of your breath most easily. Is it just beneath your nose, at your chest, or at your belly?

Whichever you choose, that's the place I'll be talking about when I use the word *anchor*. We're going to use this anchor for the rest of the game, so if you need to check again to see where it's easiest to feel your breathing right now, go ahead.



6. Now lightly rest your attention on your anchor and see if you can keep your body relaxed at the same time. This is how we rest in the feeling of the movement of our breath.
7. Great! Let's try this for a few more breaths together.

#### TIPS

1. *Choose Your Breathing Anchor* can also be practiced lying down or standing.
2. When leading two or more children, ask them to put one hand on their heads when they've chosen an anchor. Wait for everyone to choose an anchor before you continue.
3. It can be helpful to start the activity with a relaxing body scan. For example: feel your eyelids closed, feel your shoulders relaxed, feel your hands touching your knees, feel your legs touching the floor or the chair, and so on.
4. When the children have had some practice sitting for longer periods, you can extend this activity with a few minutes of *Mindful Breathing*.

#### VARIATION

Ask the children to choose another simple, neutral object to anchor their attention—a sound, a sensation, or counting, for example.