

Parent Relaxation & Breathing Exercise

3-FOLD BREATH

One powerful technique to center yourself, calm your emotions, and become aware of your body is to practice the 3-Fold Breath.

To complete the breaths, follow these steps:

1. Lower Belly
2. Mid Chest
3. Upper Chest
4. Connecting All Three Parts of the Breath

SIT UPRIGHT. CLOSE YOUR EYES. INHALE INTO YOUR LOWER BELLY THROUGH YOUR NOSE. Focus only on your lower belly slowly inflating. You can rest your hands on your lower belly to be sure your direction is clear. Do this 3 times.

Now send the breath to your mid chest. This area is just above the stomach and below your shoulders. Visualize the breath surrounding your torso. Focus on your ribs expanding. Do this 3 times.

Rest your fingertips on your collarbones. Breath in so that your hands rise up. Imagine filling the breath in your upper chest, feel the breath lift your shoulders. Do this 3 times.

Imagine pouring the breath into the lower belly. Once you've filled the lower belly, inhale to add the mid chest. Once you've filled the mid chest, inhale to add the upper chest. Then exhale at once and let the air fall out of your body. Be sure to contract every part of the breath to get all of the stale breath out of your body. As you progress you can hold the breath at the top until you feel a small bit of anxiety, then let the breath out as slowly and quietly as you can. Repeat this 3 times.

4-LINE FEELINGS CHECK

One of the most important things we practice on a daily basis at Equinox is identifying and expressing our emotions. This helps us gain more awareness of ourselves, our relationships, our actions, and our choices, among other things.

A "FOUR-LINE FEELINGS CHECK" IS ONE WAY TO ACKNOWLEDGE HOW YOU FEEL, BOTH TO YOURSELF AND/OR TO OTHERS. In this practice we bring awareness to ourselves on four levels: body, mind, heart & soul.

- Body (physical): internal and external physical sensations, sight, sound, smell and taste
- Mind (mental): thoughts and cognitions
- Heart (emotional): mood and specific emotions
- Soul (spiritual): sense of connectedness and integration

Mindfulness in this case means being aware of the experience versus your interpretation of the experience. Think of this as listening instead of talking.

EXAMPLES:

Body: tense | Body: relaxed Mind: racing | Mind: still
Heart: heavy | Heart: light Soul: empty | Soul: connected