



TODAY'S TOPIC:

Breathing

You are welcome to use this lesson to inspire spiritual conversation in your family or youth classroom. It is written for elementary age but could be adjusted as needed.

THINKING JOB: Ask a "thinking job question" to get everyone thinking about something pertinent to the lesson. This could be asked moments or hours before your conversation.

What is my breathing like when I am happy? Does it change when I feel mad?

Lesson

Materials	Things to Prepare	Today's Goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	Know that our breath affects our emotions, and our emotions affect our breath.

ACTION: Have everyone take one big deep breath. Have everyone take three slow breaths.

SHARE: *Random facts: Did you know?*

- We breathe an average of twelve times per minute.
- We breathe into our lungs and then the oxygen goes into our blood which takes it around our body.
- Though the air goes in and out of our lungs, the action of breathing is actually done by the muscles around the lungs.
- We have to breathe to live and mostly our bodies do it on their own, but we have a lot of control over how we breathe.

ASK: Have you ever noticed how your breathing changes when you are upset or excited? What about when you are very relaxed or about to fall asleep?

Our breath is an indicator or signal of our mood/emotion, and our mood/emotion is an indicator of our breath. This means that when our mood changes, it changes our breath. It also means we can change how we breathe to change our mood.

ACTIVITY: Breathing exercises (best sitting up, cross legged)

- See Breathing Exercises Sheet

ASK: Why would we want to do breathing exercises? Just like you exercise other muscles, exercising your breathing muscles makes them stronger and can help you control your mood, emotions, feelings. You can feel calm, relaxed, able to pay attention, not scared, kinder, more creative.

ASK: Do you think breathing has anything to do with God? Did God give us a way to help us connect with our feelings? If God is everywhere, then God is in every breath!

ACTION: Imagine the air we breathe is a bright light. Maybe it's gold or silver or pink. Picture that light going into your lungs, into your blood and moving through your entire body. Just like oxygen moves through your body, and the light moves through your body, God moves through your body.

AFFIRMATION –repeat 4X

Note: Printable affirmations and coloring sheets for this lesson are available at <https://www.milehichurch.org/youth-family/> .

BREATHING EXERCISES

1-Sit cross legged, straight and tall. 2 - We usually breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. 3 - Usually breathe deep so explain the difference between shallow breathes and deep breaths. 4 - Explain the difference between inhale and exhale.

Flower Breath: Imagine smelling a beautiful flower, breathe in through the nose and out the mouth, releasing any tension.

Hissing Breath: Breathe in the nose, long deep inhale, and out the mouth on a hissing sound, slow and long. Extending the exhale will allow kids to slow down their inner speed.

Bunny Breath: Just 3 quick sniffs in the nose and one long exhale out the nose. Invite kids to pretend to be bunnies, sniffing the air for other bunnies, carrots to eat, or safety.

Dragon Breath: Breath in through the nose, and on the exhale through your mouth by opening your mouth wide, sticking out your tongue and breathing loudly like a dragon.

Tumble Dryer: Point your index fingers towards each other and position them so your left finger is pointing to the right and your right finger is pointing to the left overlapping a bit in



front of your mouth and blow as you spin your fingers round each other, making a lovely long exhalation.

Bumble Bee: Breathe in through your nose, then with fingers in your ears hum out your exhalation. The lovely comforting resonance of this has a calming effect and done with eyes closed can make it even more peaceful.

Balloon: Start by cupping your hands round your mouth as if you are about to blow up a balloon. Take a deep breath in through your nose and slowly start to blow out through your mouth, growing your hands outwards in time with your exhale as if you are blowing up an enormous hot air balloon.

Elephant Breathing: Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms dangling in front of your body like an elephant's trunk. As you breathe in deeply through your nose, raise your arms up high above your head. Then slowly swing your arms down again as you breathe out through your mouth.

Find the Pause: Breathe normally. At the end of each out-breath, notice the short pause that happens before you breathe in again. Relax a different part of your body during each pause.