

Team Building Activity

Focus Word Breathing

Focus Area: Well-being

Description: Focus Word Breathing is an easy calming and stress-relieving activity.

Length of Activity: 5 minutes

In-person or Virtual: This activity can be conducted in-person or virtually.

Directions:

1. Share introduction: "Many of us don't pay attention to the way we breathe. Breathing deeply into the lower lungs so the belly expands allows the intake of more oxygen. This 'full oxygen exchange' slows blood pressure and the heart rate, producing a calming effect for the whole body. Let's try it!"
2. Invite employees to get into a comfortable position (sitting or standing) and with or without eyes closed.
3. Ask employees to think of a word - any word that resonates with them. This word can be motivating, inspiring, calming or something that makes them smile. (Consider offering a word for employees to borrow, for example: "resilient.")
4. Instruct employees:
**NOTE: You can play [this visual aid](#) to help employees breathe deeply.
 - a. "Now that you have your word, say or think that word "in" to yourself as you breathe in for three counts, and focus on just that word and the air filling your lungs." (Feel free to breathe naturally, in and out through your mouth and/or nose, whichever is most comfortable for you.)
 - b. "As you breathe out, release the air slowly for three counts, and say or think "out" your word to yourself, continuing the focus on the word and the air leaving your lungs."
 - c. Repeat steps a through b several times.
5. End this activity by asking employees to reflect on how they feel and invite those who are comfortable sharing to tell the group their focus word.