



EMOTION INTERACTION EXERCISES

3-5 year olds

To aid calming down:

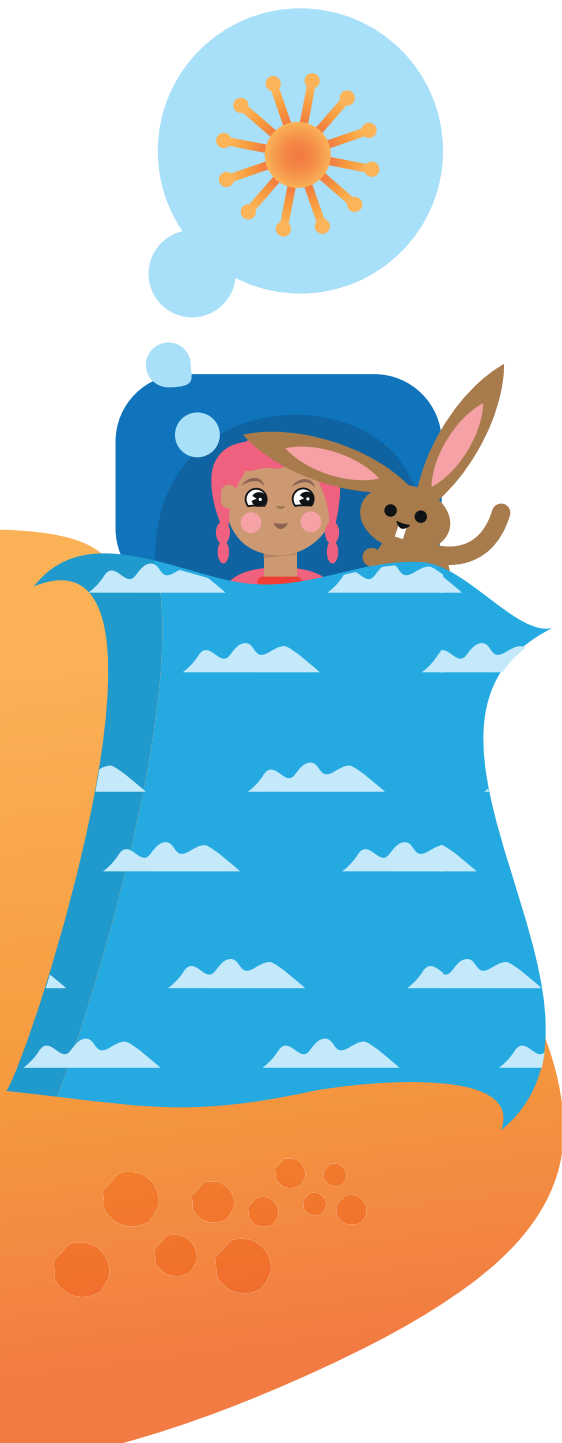
- a. Raise your hand, so you can comfortably look at it.
- b. Turn your hand, so you're looking at your open palm.
- c. Take the index finger of your other hand and place it at the root of your thumb.
- e. Now calmly fill your lungs with air while moving your index finger UP to the top of your thumb.
- f. Now exhale, moving your index finger DOWN between your thumb and forefinger.
- g. Continue breathing, moving your index finger to the adjacent finger as you do so, involving all fingers in this way: inhale finger UP, exhale finger DOWN.

(This exercise works just as well for older children and adults too.)

You can then return from your "finger-breath safari" retracing your route backwards: starting at your pinky and ending where you started, i.e. at the base of your thumb.)

For compassion, when facing sadness, grief or a just a bad mood:

- b. Start by stroking your cheeks, shoulders and chest.
- c. While doing this verbalize your feelings: "now you are sad", "you're in a bad place", identifying in simple terms whatever you feel is pulling you down right now.
- d. Tell yourself: "It will pass".





For 6-8 year olds:

To calm down:

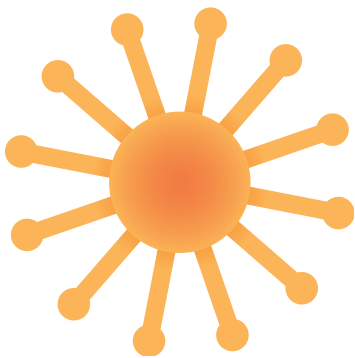
- Close your eyes.
- Think of something pleasant that you have experienced.
- This memory can be related to home, friends, success, any moment you recall as being wonderful, anything that felt genuinely good.
- Can you recall the circumstances of the memory you chose? Smells? Tastes? Sensations on your skin or on your body? Sounds? Who was with you? What did the place where this memory took place look like?
- Now savor this wonderful and warm memory, eyes closed. Enjoy!
- Feel free to reinforce this memory by sharing it with a friend, teacher, parent, etc.
- The next time you are sad, remember: you can return to this wonderful memory whenever you want to.

(TIP: You can draw a picture of this memory, perhaps placing it next to your bed?)

For compassion

- Close your eyes.
- Think of a particularly dear animal or person whom you feel very close to:
- While breathing calmly, in your mind tell this character you have chosen:
 - "I hope you are happy and cheerful".
 - "I hope you are well".
 - "I wish you all the best".
- Repeat these phrases at least three times.
- Now make note how your body feels, when you think about good, pleasant things.

(psst! You can wish the same wonderful things for yourself too!)





For 9-10 year olds:

To calm down

- Sit on a chair, feet flat on the ground.
- Place your hands on your knees.
- Breathe in.
- As you exhale, imagine you are doing so through a straw.
- Continue exhaling calmly and for a long time, for as long as your breath allows you to do so comfortably.
- Repeat this at least 5-10 times, or for as long as you feel calm and comfortable doing so.

(TIP: You should practice this exercise even when you are not yet feeling nervous or need to calm down)

For compassion

- Sit down comfortably or hug yourself into a small ball, your arms around your body.
- Stroke your arms, chest, face and head with your hands.
- Go on to stroke your stomach, your legs and your toes as well.
- Stroke calmly, quietly, slowly...
- Imagine that someone very dear and safe is stroking you.
- Hear in your ears what they are saying to you:
"you are loved, wonderful, important,
and good just the way you are.
And you are safe..."
- Continue doing this for as long as it feels good.
(When doing this exercise in a group, position people facing a wall.
Doing this brings privacy within a communality,
and everyone gets their own place of peace.)

