

## Mindfulness Strategies for Resiliency Training: Elementary

*A supplement to National Child Traumatic Stress Network Trauma-Informed Care Disaster Resources*

**Elephant Breathing:** Interlock fingers together. Lean over and let your trunk to hang down, tucking the chin to the chest. Swing back and forth while inhaling one direction then exhaling the other. Repeat. Add an elephant trumpet while arms fly high in the air, releasing all the air possible, then return to swinging trunk breathing.

**Eagle Breathing:** Imagine feeling so light you float up into the sky. Arms rise high into the air, while knees bend down. Bring arms down in a slow flapping motion, rise high up onto the toes, pausing at the top and holding the breath while remaining as still as possible. Release the air, exhaling, and repeat, arms floating high, pause at the top while knees bend and holding the breath then slowly down. If students want, they can release high pitch eagle whistles on the out breath.

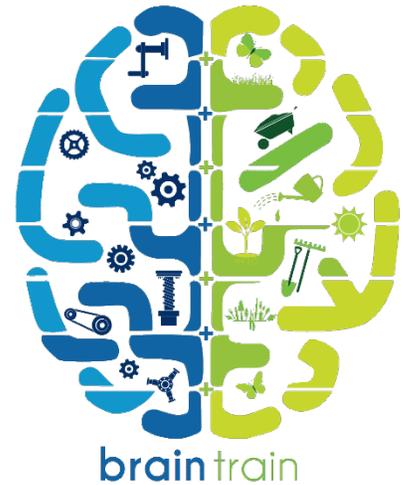
**Balloon Breathing:** Holding hands together to make a circle as if gripping a ball, inhale. Exhale slowly as if to blow up a balloon, while allowing hands to come apart and expanding arms out. At the end of each inhale and exhale, pause holding the breath for 1-2 seconds.

**Turtle Breathing:** Kneeling on the floor while sitting on the feet, inhale, leaning forward hiding face with the hands cupped above head as if pulling the head back into the shell. Exhale, hands on the ground, head up tall, looking around, saying outloud what you see. Repeat 4 times.

**Finger Breathing:** Hold your hand up spreading fingers out. With the other hand, using the pointer finger, starting at the thumb, inhale and go down the thumb, exhale going up the next finger. Pause at the top and bottom of each finger and repeat until you finish all the fingers. May stop there or return to the thumb.

**Star, Square, & Triangle Breathing:** Print, cut out and tape on desk or make a poster for the wall. Students can also draw their own shape and do it on their own. Inhale up one side, hold for a second or two, exhale down the other side. Repeat until return to beginnings. See photos below.

**Lazy 8 Breathing:** Standing or seated, start with arm raised over head and to the side. Inhale while moving the arm across the body, down to the other side, then returning to heart center. Exhale dropping the arm down to the other side and return to heart center. Repeat 4 times. Slow is best with a count of four for both inhale and exhale. Play around with the count; see if students can increase the count to 5 or 6. Print and tape to desk and trace the figure 8 with finger, matching the inhale breath with one circle then exhale tracing the other circle.



## Mindfulness Strategies for Resiliency Training: Secondary

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**4-7-8 Breathing:** Inhale for the count of 4. Hold it for 7. Exhale with lips pinched tight to let the exhale out slow. Exhale for 8 counts. Repeat 4 times. Inhale big, exhale big, and out the toes.

**4-7-8 Breathing with Tapping:** While tapping under the collar bone where it connects to the sternum, inhale four counts. With an open hand, pat the mid sternum for 7 counts while holding the breath. Bump breath, with small, quick blows of air for each count, exhale out with pinched lips 8 counts. Repeat 4 times. Inhale big, exhale big and out the toes.

**Lazy 8 Breathing:** Standing or seated, start with arm raised over head and to the side. Inhale while moving the arm across the body, down to the other side, then returning to heart center. Exhale dropping the arm down to the other side and return to heart center. Repeat 4 times. Slow is best with a count of four for both inhale and exhale. Play around with the count; see if students can increase the count to 5 or 6. Print and tape to desk and trace the figure 8 with finger, matching the inhale breath with one circle then exhale tracing the other circle.

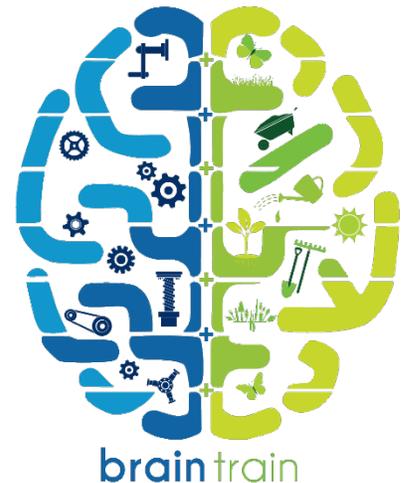
**Finger Breathing:** Hold your hand up spreading fingers out. With the other hand, using the pointer finger, starting at the thumb, inhale and go down the thumb, exhale going up the next finger. Pause at the top and bottom of each finger and repeat until you finish all the fingers. May stop there or return to the thumb.

**Belly Breathing:** Inhale deeply into the lower abdomen, thinking about inhaling to an area two inches below the navel and two inches deep, expanding with the inhale. Exhale, release the breath and allow the abdomen to return to normal. Repeat 3 times or a determined amount of time.

**Finger Holds:** While holding gently a finger of choice, mindfully breath to the finger, thinking about the memory or emotion you wish to feel better about.

- a. Thumb for Tears, Grief, Loss, Sadness
- b. Pointer finger for Fear and Panic
- c. Middle for Anger and Resentment:
- d. Ring for Worry, Anxiety, Pre-Occupation
- e. Pinky for Self-esteem

**Cross Laterals:** Cross arms and tap 8-10 times on the shoulders. Cross hands under arms and tap ribs. Cross arms tapping knees. Standing, touch elbow on opposite raised knee. Behind the body, cross the foot over to the other side while tapping on the foot. Windmills, starting with hands raised to the side, leg stance wide, cross hand down to opposite foot, repeat.



## Mindfulness Strategies for Resiliency Training: Support Tools



Rate emotion or stress level before mindfulness activities, then rating after to see how the number changed, as well as what sensations in the body changed. Low stress is a relaxed state and is numbers 1 through 3. A moderate stress state is optimal for maximum performance and is 4 through 7 (yellow). Staying in the moderate stress state for more than 4 to 8 hours can cause accumulated fatigue and other physical stress symptoms. A high stress state is 8 through 10 (red). Changes in behavior and stress reduction are required as soon as possible.

## Finger Holds

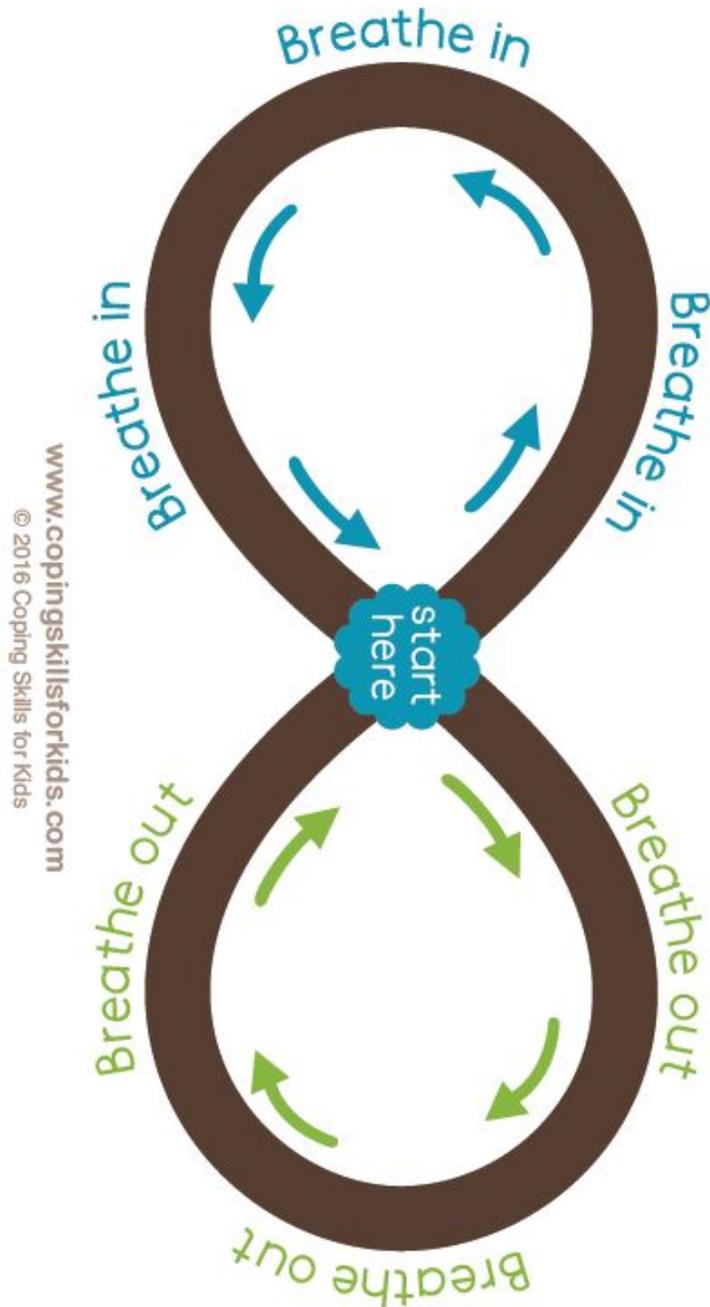


**Finger Holds:** While holding gently a finger of choice, mindfully breath to the finger, thinking about the memory or emotion you wish to feel better about.

- Thumb for Tears, Grief, Loss, Sadness (colored yellow)
- Pointer finger for Fear and Panic (colored blue)
- Middle for Anger and Resentment (colored green)
- Ring for Worry, Anxiety, Pre-Occupation (colored purple)
- Pinky for Self-esteem (colored red)

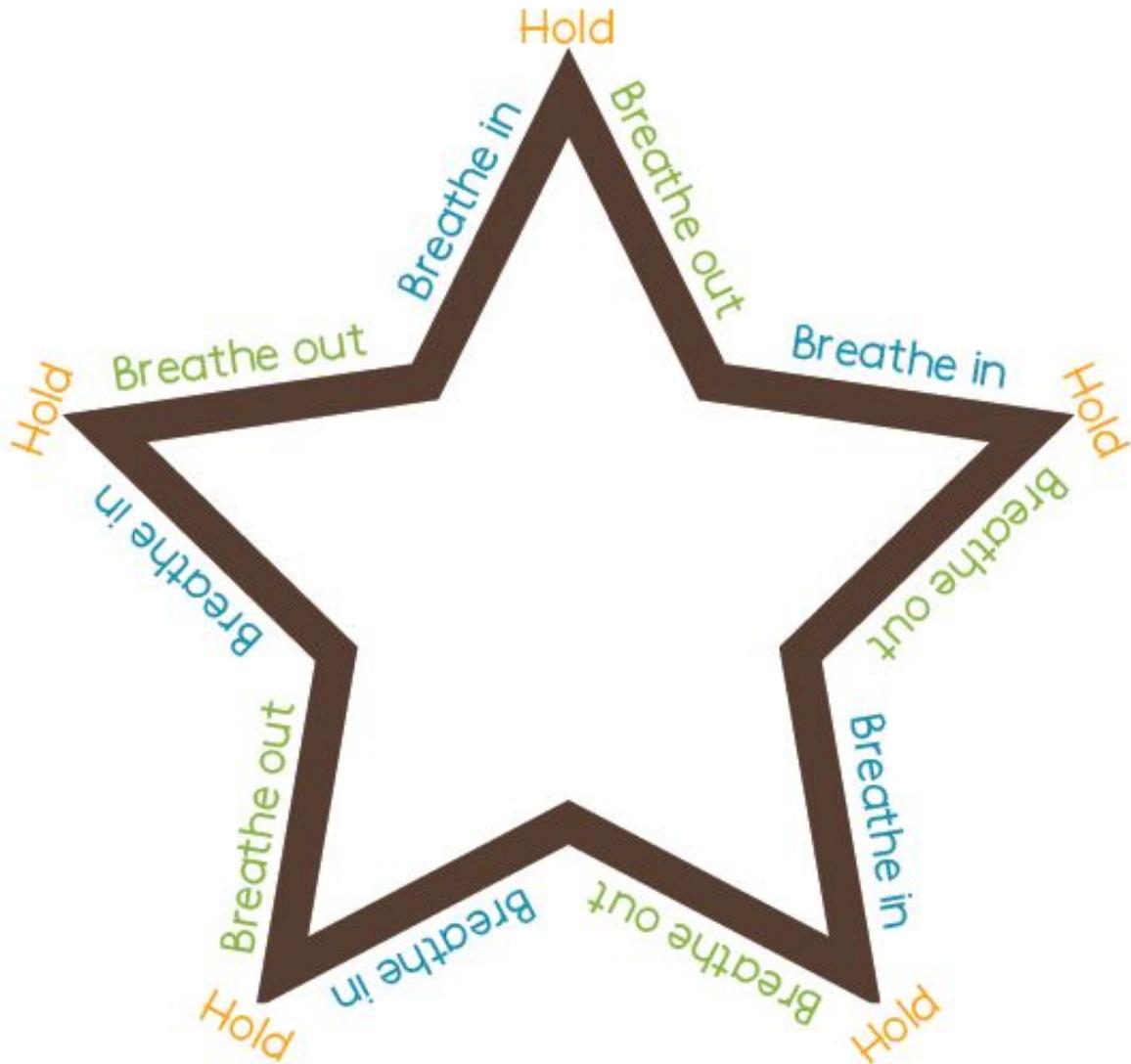
# Lazy 8 Breathing

**Lazy 8 Breathing:** Standing or seated, start with arm raised over head and to the side. Inhale while moving the arm across the body, down to the other side, then returning to heart center. Exhale dropping the arm down to the other side and return to heart center. Repeat 4 times. Slow is best with a count of four for both inhale and exhale. Play around with the count; see if students can increase the count to 5 or 6. Print and tape to desk and trace the figure 8 with finger, matching the inhale breath with one circle then exhale tracing the other circle.



# Star Breathing

**Star, Square, & Triangle Breathing:** Print, cut out and tape on desk or make a poster for the wall. Students can also draw their own shape and do it on their own. Inhale up one side, hold for a second or two, exhale down the other side. Repeat until return to beginnings. See photos below.

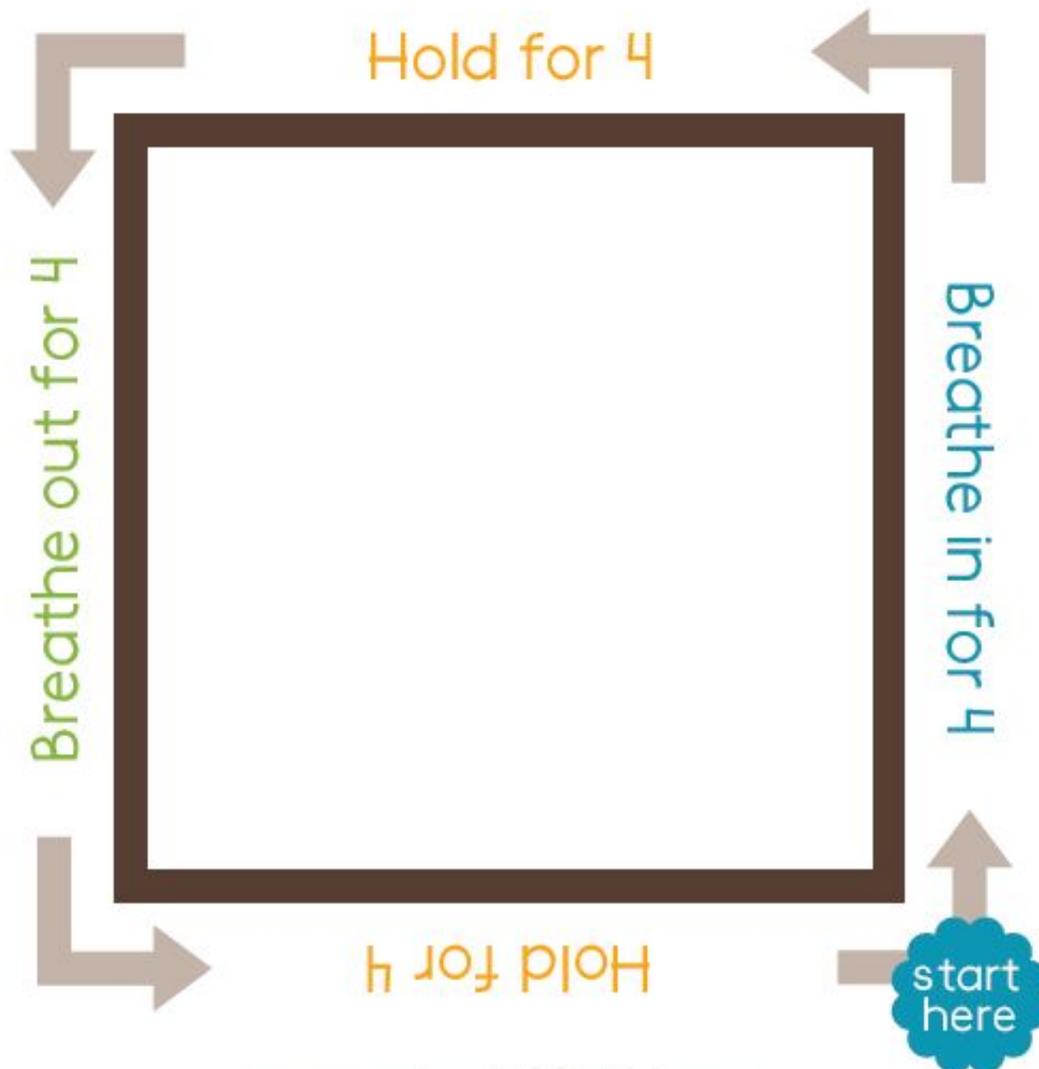


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# Square Breathing

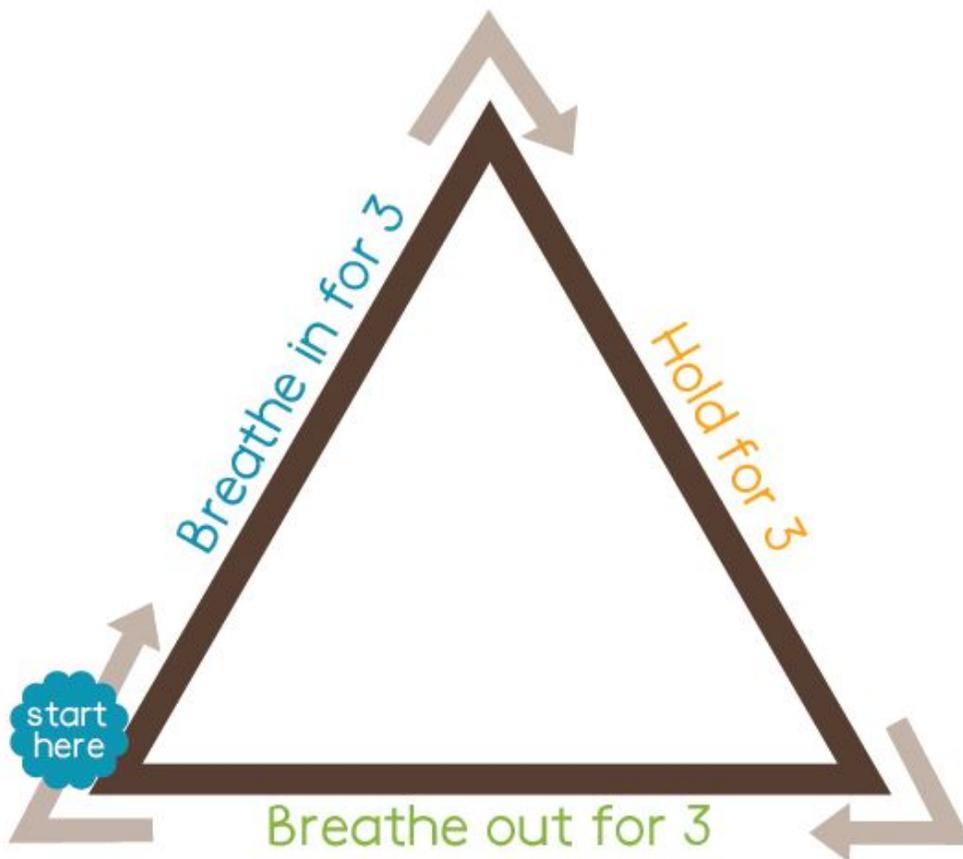
**Star, Square, & Triangle Breathing:** Print, cut out and tape on desk or make a poster for the wall. Students can also draw their own shape and do it on their own. Inhale up one side, hold for a second or two, exhale down the other side. Repeat until return to beginnings. See photos below.



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# Triangle Breathing

**Star, Square, & Triangle Breathing:** Print, cut out and tape on desk or make a poster for the wall. Students can also draw their own shape and do it on their own. Inhale up one side, hold for a second or two, exhale down the other side. Repeat until return to beginnings. See photos below.



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## Resources:

1. Capacitar Emergency Kit. (2005). Retrieved from <https://capacitar.org/capacitar-emergency-kit/>  
Includes breath work, tai chi exercise, finger holds, EFT, body holds, release methods, and acupressure.
2. DeGraffenried, W. (2018, April 01). Classes & Consultations. Retrieved from <https://moongatemindfulliving.wordpress.com/workshops-and-classes/>  
Mindfulness and Resiliency Teacher Certification, Professional Development, and Corporate Mindfulness Speaking.
3. Halloran, J. (n.d.). Coping Skills for Kids. Retrieved from <https://copingskillsforkids.com/>  
Star, square, triangle, and lazy 8 breathing pictures.
4. Minds, H. (2016, June 09). Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5aE181b7coY>  
Eagle, turtle, and elephant breathing.
5. National Child Traumatic Stress Network. (2018, April 19). Teacher Guidelines for Helping Students after an Earthquake. Retrieved from <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/teacher-guidelines-helping-students-after-earthquake>