



WINTER 2022



TAKE CARE

HEALTHY TIPS FOR WINTER

"Breathing in, I am aware of my heart. Breathing out, I smile to my heart and know that my heart still functions normally. I feel grateful for my heart."

"Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, but sometimes your smile can be the source of your joy." -

"A true partner or friend is one who encourages you to look deep inside yourself for the beauty and love you've been seeking."
- Thich Nhat Hanh



How to Get to Sleep and Find Your Calm

Eden Pontz / Managing Stress

One thing many adults and teens have in common is the need to get a better night's sleep. And while there's no substitute for a good night's sleep, sometimes just getting to sleep can present quite a challenge.

PARENTS AND TEENS: A SHARED SLEEP CHALLENGE

Both parents and teens may have experienced this scenario. You're in bed late at night, and as you close your eyes, your mind starts swirling. Stressful thoughts begin playing out in your head. Maybe you're concerned about life during a pandemic, or you have an upcoming presentation or test. Perhaps you're worried about having to get to work or school the next day. This mental roadblock to your best bedtime intentions won't go away.

NOT GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP HARMS THE BODY

A lack of sleep can take a toll on your body. Missing sleep changes your ability to function, potentially decreasing your ability to think clearly, almost as if you were legally drunk! Sleep is also needed to allow the brain to cleanse itself of toxins that build up as part of its normal day-to-day functioning.

So how can you flip your mind and body from stressed to sleepy? Two things must happen. First, the nervous system needs to switch into a relaxed state. Second, you need to distract yourself from the thoughts and feelings racing through your mind.

The Children's Health Foundation is a non-profit organization that partners with your Pediatrician to develop quality health care programs in our community. We work together to foster the highest quality care for children, to raise awareness on health issues, and to achieve better children's health outcomes. Please ask your provider for more information.

CHILDREN'S HEALTH *foundation*

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BREATHING RELAXES YOUR BODY

Forget using the common distraction technique of counting sheep. That gets boring quickly. As a result, you're likely to lose focus before it can help. Instead, try using the 4-8 breathing method – a technique that allows you to fool your body into a restful state. Here's how it works.

The body has a relaxed nervous system and a stressed nervous system. These systems run in parallel – either one or the other is on. Dr. Ken Ginsburg, the co-founder of the Center for Parent and Teen Communication, explains, "If your stressed nervous system is on, your body doesn't want to fall asleep, because you have to be ready to 'run from a tiger' (the thing that's stressing you) at any moment." So how do you turn on the relaxed nervous system? You need to do the opposite of what you would do if running from a tiger. Dr. Ginsburg says, "There are many ways in which bodies change if they were running from a tiger, but there's only one that you can control. That's the breath. Nervous breathing is shallow and rapid. It is only through choosing to do the opposite — taking deep, slow breaths, that you transform your body's nervous system from stressed to relaxed." Once you're relaxed, you can get those zzz's.

HOW THE 4-8 BREATHING TECHNIQUE WORKS

Lay comfortably on your back. You're going to work to take deep breaths that fill the belly and then the chest.

- 1) Inhale and take a full breath while counting slowly to four. Feel your belly rise.
- 2) Hold that breath for about twice as long — and then slowly exhale to a count of eight – or even longer if you can.
- 3) Repeat this about ten times and notice how your body begins to feel more relaxed – even sleepy!

Dr. Ginsburg offers a bonus movement to help further occupy your mind as you work on getting the breathing right. He suggests placing your hands together and resting them on your belly, allowing your fingers to interlock loosely with one another. Notice when you inhale, your fingers move apart and as you exhale, your fingers move back together. You become so immersed in getting this right that your intrusive thoughts fade away. Your nervous system relaxes, and then your body drifts to sleep.

REMAIN FLEXIBLE

The 4-8 breathing count doesn't have to be that precise. While this rhythm may be comfortable for many people, every person has to discover their own pace. Maybe counting to six is more comfortable, for example. Just learn to slowly inhale and then fully exhale what feels like a comfortable cleansing breath to you.

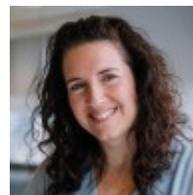
AVOID TAKING PROBLEMS TO SLEEP WITH YOU

While this strategy is about distraction, it might be better to try not to take problems to bed in the first place. Consider releasing your thoughts and feelings actively before going to bed. Pray, talk it out, or write a list. Say to yourself, "I'm going to need to go to sleep soon. I need to get this stuff off my mind." Then literally place those thoughts somewhere outside your body, so you don't carry them to bed with you.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE

The 4-8 breathing technique is not just for when you're trying to go to sleep. You can use it anytime to calm yourself. But it takes practice for techniques like this to be most effective. Letting go of your thoughts and feelings takes work. No matter where you are, make a habit of going through the motions and using your breath to relax. The biology of what happens to your body will take over if you trust that it can work for you!

Please visit [The Center for Parent & Teen Communication online for more practical tips for parenting teens today!](#)



About Eden Pontz

Eden Pontz is Executive Producer and Director of Digital Content for CPTC. She oversees digital media content development and production for Parentandteen.com. She also writes, copyedits, and produces articles, podcasts, and videos for the site. Her pieces cover a range of topics including teen development, peer pressure, and mentoring. Eden brings years of experience as a former Executive Producer of Newsgathering at CNN, as well as a field producer, writer, and reporter for CNN and other news organizations.

Article included with permission

Nutritious Nibbles: Classic Tomato Soup



You'll love this tangy, creamy soup as is, but you'll also love it when you add any of the optional ingredients at the top of the right column. It just depends on your mood! Tote it in a thermos if you're bringing lunch to school—or, if you're staying home, serve it with a grilled cheese sandwich.

KITCHEN GEAR

- Cutting board
- Sharp knife (*adult needed*)
- Measuring cups
- Measuring spoons
- Large pot
- Can opener
- Heatproof spatula
- Slotted spoon
- Blender (*adult needed*)
- Pot holders

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon olive or vegetable oil
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and chopped (or 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder)
- 1 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 (28-ounce) can whole peeled or diced tomatoes, including liquid

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Put the pot on the stove, turn the heat to medium, and add the oil. When the oil is hot, add the onion, garlic, and celery and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, about 10 minutes.
2. Add the tomatoes and their juices, the broth, and the salt. Raise the heat to high and bring to a boil.
3. Turn the heat down to low and cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to make sure it's not sticking. Set aside to cool for 15 minutes.
4. Using the slotted spoon, remove half the solids and put them in the blender. Do not fill the blender more than halfway. Put the top on the blender but remove the little cap in the center. Cover the hole with a dish towel.
5. Turn the blender to the lowest speed and begin to blend, then increase the speed gradually and blend until smooth. Turn off the blender, add the remaining solids from the pot, and blend again. While blending, gradually add the cooking liquid and yogurt through the hole in the lid. Use a clean spoon to taste the soup. Does it need an extra splash of vinegar or a pinch of salt? Add it and taste again.
6. Serve right away, or cover and refrigerate up to 3 days.

GET CREATIVE

Make it Cheesy: Add 1/4 cup grated cheddar cheese when you blend the soup.

Make it Herby: Add 1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil leaves when you blend the soup.

Make it Crunchy: Top the soup with a handful of croutons just before serving.

Make it Spicy: Add a dash of hot sauce, sliced jalapeños, or red pepper flakes just before serving.

OR ELSE

If you don't have a blender or a food processor, you can start with canned diced or crushed tomatoes and follow the instructions, skipping both the blending and the yogurt. It won't be a creamy tomato soup, but it will still be tasty!

Recipe from www.chopchopfamily.org, a national nonprofit, endorsed by the AAP and winner of the Prestigious James Beard Foundation Award for Publication of the year. ChopChop Family includes a diverse and inclusive collection of products for children, parents and older adults.

CONVERSATION HEART WORD SEARCH



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