

# Quick Ways to Relax



## Kid Cuddle.

Standing or sitting, stretch arms out wide, wide, wide. Slowly bring arms forward, cross in front. Each hand holds onto the opposite shoulder. Squeeze, rock and cuddle the kid in your arms.

## Cloud Push (to stretch out tight muscles).

We are going to practice stretching up and pushing the clouds away. Stand tall. Place your hands on your hips. Bring one arm way up over your head and stretch it straight up. Try and reach a cloud and push it away. Push, push, push! Now let your arm fall slowly to your side. Bring the other arm up and push the cloud. Push, push, push! Now let your arm fall slowly to your side. Lift both arms up. Clasp hands together; turn the palms up and push and bounce the cloud. Slowly, slowly, let your arms float gently back to your sides.



## Who Knows?

Stand at attention, or sit up straight with hands along sides. Raise shoulders up to your ears. Hold. Let shoulders drop. While your shoulders go up, say, "Who." When you drop your shoulders, say, "Knows." Repeat five times.

## Deep Breathing (to slow down the body and quiet the mind).

Get into a comfortable position, either lying at on your back on sitting comfortably with both feet flat on the floor and if you like, close your eyes. We are going to practice breathing slowly and deeply. Imagine you have a balloon in your tummy. Place one hand below your belly button. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose to a count of four. Feel the balloon fill up with air. When the balloon is full, breathe out slowly, using a count of four, to flatten the balloon. Your hand may rise and fall as the balloon fills and empties.

1. Slowly blow up the balloon .... 1 ....2 .... 3 .... 4 ....
2. Now, slowly blow out and flatten the balloon .... 1 .... 2 .... 3 .... 4 ....
3. Repeat five times and then breathe normally.

Caution. Remember to breathe out as slowly as you breathe in. Breathing in deeply without relaxed slow exhalation can lead to dizziness or hyperventilation.



## Go Tight - Go Loose.

Stand at attention, hands along sides, fingers pointing down. Make a fist with each hand, and squeeze each hand tight. Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze... Relax. Now, while you squeeze your fists again, tighten your arms to squeeze your body, Squeeze...Squeeze... Squeeze... Relax. Now, this time also squeeze your legs together while making a fist and squeezing your arms together, Squeeze... Squeeze... Squeeze. Relax. Repeat. Shake out your hands, arms, and legs. Enjoy the sense of relaxation.

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