Sometimes you need a little more structure and playfulness around how to take a deep breath.

Using shapes is an easy way to keep track of breaths in and out. You can use your finger to trace the shape so you know where you are in your breathing.

Try each and see how they work for you!

For more coping skills resources and products, visit

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Square Breathing

The people in the cars below are taking a slow, relaxing drive. The road is in the shape of a square for you to trace. Start at the bottom right of the square. Follow the cars around the whole square to complete one deep breath. As you count, enjoy the scenery! Can you find the fish, the dock and the boat?

Hold for 4

Breathe out for 4

Breathe in for 4

Hold for 4

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Our skating rink is shaped like an 8 on its side. The skaters glide along the ice, smooth and slow. Skate a figure 8 with your finger! Enter the rink and move up, tracing the left part of the 8 while you breathe in. When you get to the middle of the 8, breathe out while you trace the right part of the 8.
Star Breathing

Up in space things move very slowly. Think about what it would be like to float through the air if you didn’t weigh anything! Start at any “Breathe in” side of the star, hold your breath at the point, then breathe out. Keep going until you’ve gone around the whole star. Imagine you are an astronaut!
Triangle Breathing

Camels love to stroll around the pyramids in Egypt. Maybe because they have two humps, and a pyramid only has one! Start at the warm, relaxing sun, and follow the sides around the whole triangle shape with your finger to complete one deep breath. As you pass the palm trees, imagine they gently sway!

Breathe in for 3
Breathe out for 3
Hold for 3