

Three Elementary School Children

When did they practice?: Most common were bedtime and morning. But some practiced at breakfast and evening also.

What modes did they practice?: Folding mode, Tip mode, Segment mode and Counting mode.

Why did they practice?: Felt tired in the morning, practiced and felt awake, I got up before my mom and she didn't wake me up as she was doing before, When I got home from school, I was mad and I did the breathing, Helped me not watch TV, When I had a headache I did the breathing and my headache went away. When I was mad with my friend.

How did the breathing help?: Helped me get to sleep, Wake up and eat breakfast, I did the breathing when my dog got crazy and my dog calmed down! Helped me go to sleep, It calmed me down when I was mad, I would do the breathing when I was hyper and it calms me down.

I like the breathing because.....: It is fun and relaxing, It is good for me, My mom wants me to teach her and I will teach her when I learn all.

Parents' feedback: "I think the breathing practice is helping my daughter in managing her impulses."; "My son tends to do his breathing while he's trying to fall asleep. I've observed him utilizing it over the past week, during an anxiety provoking situation. "

Summary of feedback from 3 children in Gr 1-3 who attended 3 of my classes at Robert C. Parker School.

A class teacher using breathing breaks

"I was introduced to 'Counting Breaths' along with my 2nd and 3rd grade students four years ago. As we practiced it, my students and myself felt relaxed tremendously within a matter of moments. We begin our 'Morning Meeting' by asking the students to give themselves the opportunity to breathe quietly, for at least three minutes. We conclude by practicing a minimum of five breaths together. Even children who find quieting down extremely challenging, can achieve silence through the peer influence that comes with group practice.

I have consciously incorporated breathing breaks throughout our day - at every transition and before starting anything new. I have also committed to pausing what we are doing when I see even one student getting antsy or moody. We all take breathing breaks for only take a couple minutes. BUT their impact is profound and can carry us through big chunks of time. Breathing together, brings almost every child immediately into a relaxed mindset. I feel impatience and stress wash away too.

I used to think that the fun and laughs we had and the connection and trust I strive to create with each student, would ensure focus when the time required it. But from C S's guidance and teaching, I saw that I needed to do something more. He has changed the way I live in the class and made me pay closer attention to what's really happening in front of me."

Lynn Schuster, an innovative 2-3 grade class teacher at Robert C. Parker School.

Eight Residents in a Nursing Home

What modes did they practice?: Counting mode, 911 mode, Tip mode, Starting mode, Feeling mode ,

When did they practice?: Waiting, Bedtime, Bored, Stressed, Meditating, Waking up, Tired, Walking, Exercising, Worried, Nervous.

How did it help them?: I sleep better, I fell asleep quicker, I sleep in my wheelchair, Went to bed, Helped me to relax, To be patient while waiting for response to call button, Helped in waiting, To feel calmer after an unpleasant encounter with one of the aides, Calmed me, Overcome anxiety, Relaxed me, Breathing became more relaxed, This program is really helping me to relax, I feel relaxed when I wake up to a new day, Helped me to stop thinking dread and worrying about what next steps would be towards independent status, Helped me stop anxiety by focusing on the technique, To stop feeling sorrowful for myself, Helps me not to think about my daughter not calling me, When I was in distress I started counting and then I felt really good, I am now talking more, Seeing and seeking other things, Helped me know others, I have some place to go if I need help, To think of what I need, Made me think, Helps me breathe right, Helps me in many ways to be able to deal with everyday life, Helps me when I feel tired, I feel real good when I do the counting mode, The counting and feeling modes helped me to meditate, calm down and be able to focus and be happy, It helped me get organized in my life and also my spiritual life with God.

Responses from 8 residents who attended 8 sessions at Van Rensselaer Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Facility. .