



# Mental health activities for school staff

Partnership for Children promotes good mental health for children – for life.

We offer a series of school-based programmes to help young children around the world to communicate effectively, cope with their anxieties and difficulties, and to develop skills for life.

We provide resources for teachers, parents and carers, giving them the information and tools they need to support their children.

However, it is important to look after your own wellbeing as well as promoting the positive mental health of your pupils.

Therefore, the activities we have produced in this document aim to develop the coping skills of teachers and school staff.

These can be used individually but could also be used during supervision or a wellbeing staff meeting.



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# RESILIENCE ACTIVITY - IDENTIFY YOUR STRENGTHS

Focusing on your strengths will increase your confidence, generate optimism and help you to value yourself. Take some time to answer the following questions, without false modesty. If you are feeling brave, ask someone you really trust and respect to answer the questions about you, too.



**WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT ME?**

EXAMPLES: I'm kind, I'm funny

**WHAT DO I LIKE MOST ABOUT MYSELF?**

EXAMPLES: My determination, my trustworthiness

**WHAT AM I LIKE WHEN I AM AT MY BEST?**

EXAMPLES: Creative, patient

**WHAT OR WHO, BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN ME?**

EXAMPLES: My partner, success in my work

**WHAT IS MY MOST SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT?**

EXAMPLES: Teaching, running in a race

**HOW HAVE YOUR STRENGTHS HELPED YOU IN THE PAST?**

EXAMPLES: Getting a job, looking after someone

**HOW CAN YOUR STRENGTHS HELP YOU IN THE FUTURE?**

EXAMPLES: Maintaining friendships, stay focused

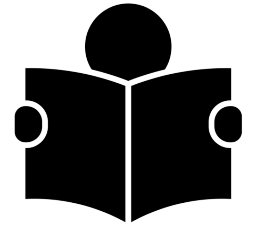
**Try to find new ways to use your strengths each week.**

# DISTRACTION LIST

Just as the name implies, distraction is anything you do to temporarily take your attention off of strong emotion. Sometimes, focusing on a strong emotion can make it feel even stronger and more out of control. Therefore, by temporarily distracting yourself, you may give the emotion some time to decrease in intensity, making it easier to manage.

It may seem clear that taking your mind off of an intense emotion would be helpful, and research supports this finding.

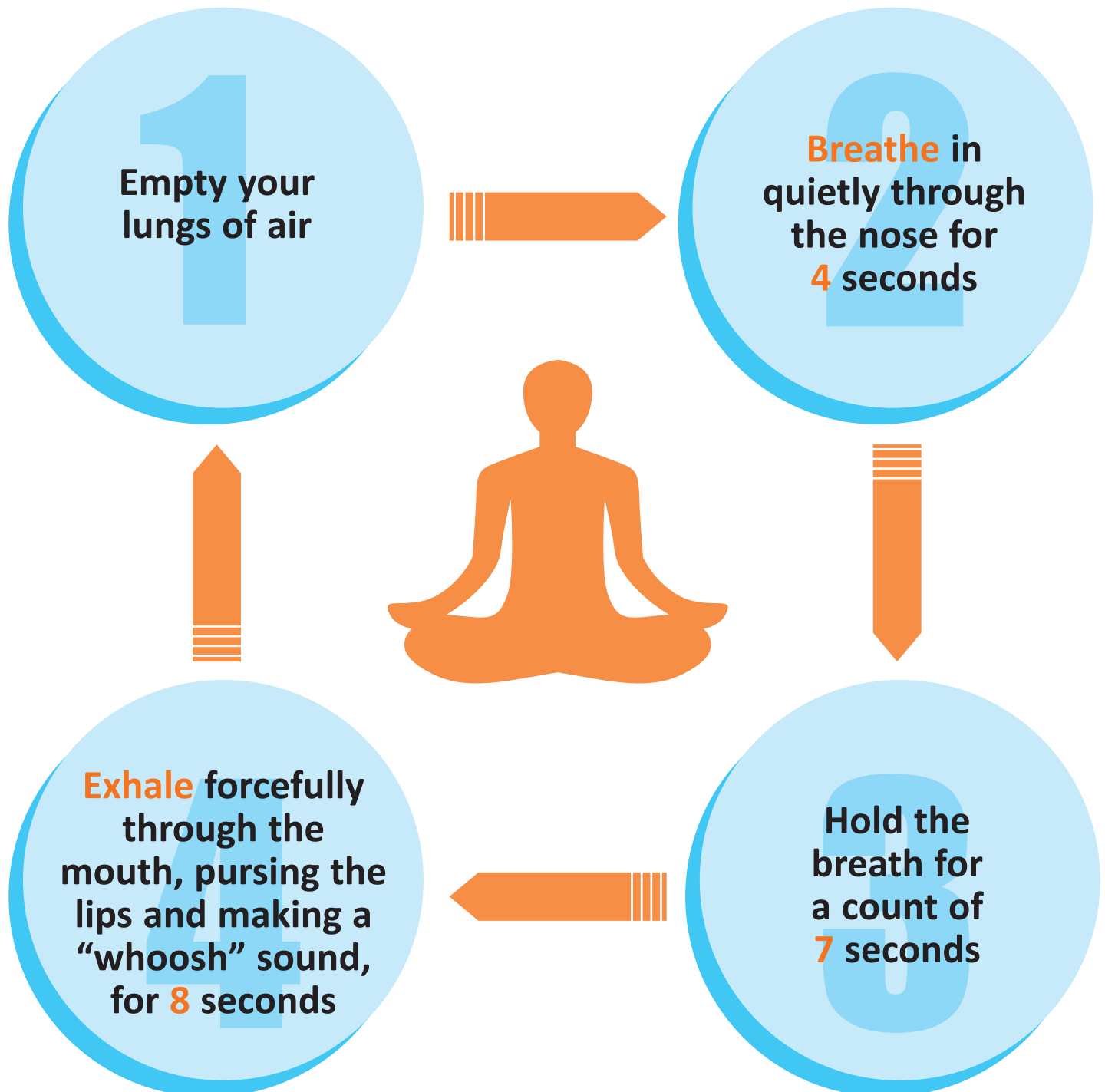
Write down as many fun distractions as you can think of in the space below – Then refer to these when your emotions spiral.



## 4-7-8 BREATHING EXERCISE

The 4-7-8 breathing technique requires a person to focus on taking a long, deep breath in and out. Rhythmic breathing is a core part of many meditation and yoga practices as it promotes relaxation.

Before starting the breathing pattern, adopt a comfortable sitting position and place the tip of the tongue on the tissue right behind the top front teeth.



**Repeat the cycle up to 4 times**

## 5-4-3-2-1 COPING TECHNIQUE

Before starting this exercise, pay attention to your breathing. Slow, deep, long breaths can help you maintain a sense of calm or help you return to a calmer state. Once you find your breath, go through the following steps to help ground yourself.

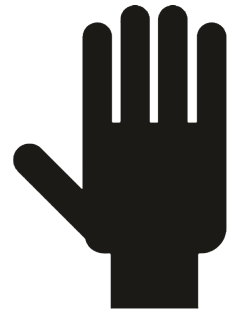
**5**

Things you can see



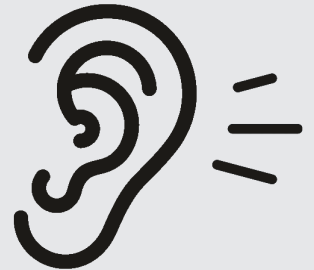
**4**

Things you can feel (my feet on the floor, the air in my nose)



**3**

Things you can hear (traffic, birds)



**2**

Things you can smell (or 2 smells you like)



**1**

Things you can taste (the inside of your mouth)

