

Instructions

1. **Warm-up:** Practice Heart-Focused Breathing™ for two minutes to promote focus and coherence.

Heart-Focused Breathing™ Technique

The Heart-Focused Breathing Technique is a simple-to-use, energy-saving, self-regulation strategy designed to reduce the intensity of a stress reaction and to establish a calm but alert state. It helps you to take a “time-out” where you can step back and neutralize depleting emotions.

Combining the simple act of focusing on the heart area with a slightly deeper level of breathing helps draw energy away from distressed thoughts and feelings by interrupting your body’s mechanical stress response.

We can gain benefit from conscious breathing if we use it to help us shift into and sustain a more balanced state, understanding that breathing is only the start of what we call the coherence-building process.

Step

Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual. Find an easy rhythm that’s comfortable.

Heart-Focused Breathing Applications

- Neutralize emotional reactions in the moment
- Reduce the impact of stress
- Plug energy drains

Once you are familiar with practicing the step above, try the **Quick Step:**

- Heart-focused breathing

2. **Drawing:** Each student draws a simple picture using various shapes on plain paper, keeping their drawings hidden from their partner. Overly complex drawings make duplications less likely.
3. **Partnering:** Pair the students up and if necessary, place a partition between them to prevent them from seeing each other’s drawings.

- 4. Communication:** One partner describes their drawing to the other using clear, step-by-step instructions that include color, location, angle, shape, and size.
- 5. Comparison:** After the listener has finished drawing, compare the original and duplicate drawings. Discuss the accuracy and identify areas for improvement in communication.
- 6. Switch Roles:** Switch roles and repeat the activity, practicing Heart-Focused Breathing™ before starting.

Modifications

- 1. Active Listening:** Have the listener repeat back the communicator's instructions to ensure accuracy.
- 2. Increased Difficulty:** For more advanced learners, increase the complexity of the drawing.
- 3. Alternative Materials:** Use pattern blocks for building designs instead of drawing.
- 4. Math Integration:** Adapt the activity to reinforce specific math concepts like angles or types of triangles.