

## PARENT WORKBOOK ACTIVITY 2: The “Core Practice”

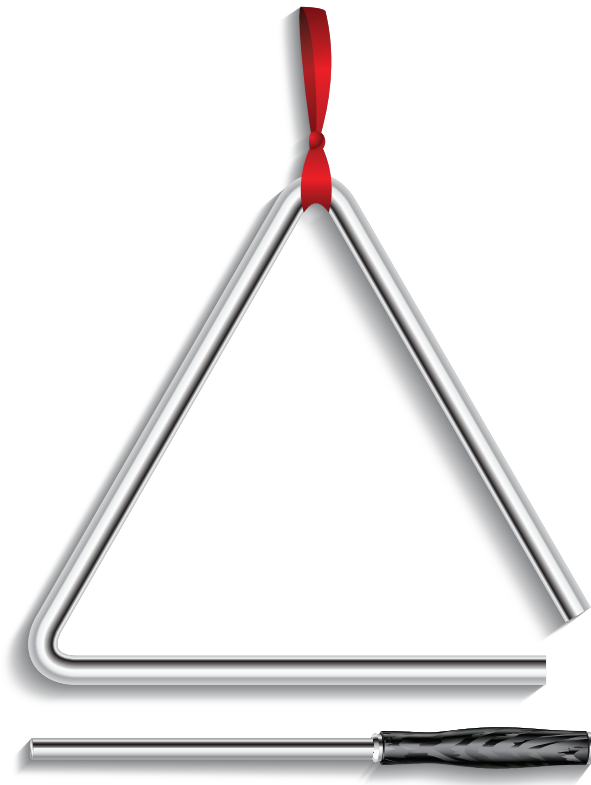
Mindful awareness through focused attention is a valuable skill for both children and caregivers to learn and master. Children and adults who learn that mindful breathing helps to calm them down, which in turn allows them to think more clearly and act in a reflective manner, will be better able to regulate their emotions, reduce stress, and make better decisions. **We highly recommend the MindUP™ Core Practice be done three times each day.**

### The MindUP™ “Core Practice”

Learn how to take a “brain break”! Now let’s practice together the simple steps of the MindUP™ core practice:

- 1) Sit up tall, eyes down turned or closed
- 2) Listen for the chime (if using one)
- 3) Inhale through your nose and out your mouth
- 4) Fill the lungs fully, extending the breath to your abdomen.
- 5) Focus your attention on your breath (this could be as little as 3 breaths!)
- 6) Notice thoughts, return your attention to your breath
- 7) Listen for the chime a second time, and follow the resonant sound as long as you can

**Reduce stress, calm the amygdala, access the PFC, and increase focus!**



Parent Workbook Activity 2 :

## MindUP™ For Parents

### Parent Personal Reflection

After the workshop, take a few quiet and focused minutes to reflect and thoughtfully respond to the following:

- When are the best times during the day for my own “brain break”?
- When are the best times during the day for me to help my children with the core practice?
- How am I most comfortable teaching the core practice?
- What other ways can I help increase my child’s awareness of his or her breath?



## MindUP™ Family Activity Ideas:

### Ages 4-6: Teaching about the breath

- Have your child lie down on the floor and put a beanbag or stuffed animal on her stomach. Instruct her to quietly watch the object rise and fall with her breath.
- Blow bubbles together and watch them float to the ground.
- Use pinwheels to practice using your breath to make them go slow and fast.

### Ages 7-10: Teaching about the breath

- Parents can use the “smell the flowers, blow out the candle” image to help children develop the skill of focusing attention through breathing.
- Use a focusing tool like a glitter wand or liquid timer to help him practice mindful breathing.

### Ages 11-14: Teaching about the breath

- Do the “cotton ball activity” together. Each person has a cotton ball, and has to practice 1) blowing it past an object, 2) blowing it to hit a target, and then 3) practicing a gentle breath to push the cotton ball from the middle of the palm of the hand, to the fingertips without it falling.
- Teach your teen to be aware of his breath while playing sports, taking a hike, or participating in a yoga class. Is he able to slow his breath when it quickens? Is he able to focus his breath to enhance his performance?



## Parent Workbook Activity 2 :

## Further Reading and Resources

### Learn More . . .

You can train your brain to be fully present and mindfully aware.

Mindful awareness and attunement stimulates emotional circuits in the brain leading to an improved parent-child relationship.

Great brain books for kids  
Ages 4-6

Great brain books for kids  
Ages 7-10

Great brain book for teens  
Ages 11-14

### Good Books . . .

**The Emotional Life of Your Brain: How It's Unique Patterns Affect the Way You Think, Feel and Live -- and How You Can Change Them**  
*By Richard J. Davidson*

**Parenting from the Inside Out**  
*By Dan Siegel and Mary Hartzell*

**A Quiet Place**  
*By Douglas Wood*

**Peaceful Piggy Meditation**  
*By Kerry Lee and Kerry MacLean*

**Cool Cats, Calm Kids: Relaxation and Stress Management for Young People**  
*By Mary Williams*

**Breathe In, Breathe Out: Learning about your Lungs**  
*By Pamela Hill Nettleton*

**The Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens: Mindfulness Skills to Help You Deal with Stress**  
*By Gina Biegel*