

Four Word Mantra & Deep Breathing



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- * Come up with four words to help make you feel like the best you can be
- * Count each word on your fingers
- * Take a deep belly breath in & slowly let it out
- * Repeat three times

How it works:

First start by helping the child form their four word mantra, examples: "I can calm down" "I can sit still" "I can be awesome". Make sure this is something the child can identify with most and is personalized to them.

Next do the mantra with the child, show them they can count along on their fingers as they say each word.

At the end of the mantra show the child how to do a deep & slow breath, show them the best way to ensure it is a deep breath, is when their shoulders move up.

Have the child do this at least three times to help with self regulation & bringing them back to the present, some may need to repeat more than three times.

Targeted Audience: Age 5 to Age 13 but can be modified to be used on individuals older.

Target Behaviors: If a child is over stimulated: in a classroom, at home, or out in public. Getting them to self regulate can be difficult. By bringing them back to the present by having them repeat their mantra and taking deep breaths will help calm them down & allow them to come back to the present.

Why it works:

It has been revealed through a psychological intervention, that self-affirmations help facilitate self-control (Schmeichel & Vohs, 2009). If a child is over stimulated, having them concentrate on a mantra can help bring some self control and bring the child back to the present.

Deep & slow breathing techniques (DSB) have been shown through experimental research that it can reduce negative feelings (tension & anger) and arousal (Busch, Magerl, Kern, Haas, Hajak & Eichhammer, 2011).



References:

- Schmeichel, B. J. & Vohs, K. (2009). Self-affirmation and self-control: Affirming core values counteracts ego depletion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 96(4), 770-782. doi:http://dx.doi.org.marshall.idm.oclc.org/10.1037/a0014635
- Busch, V., Magerl, W., Kern, U., Haas, J., Hajak, G., & Eichhammer, P. (2011). The effect of deep and slow breathing on pain perception, autonomic activity, and mood processing-An experimental study. *Pain Medicine Journal* 13(2), 212-228. <https://doi.org.marshall.idm.oclc.org/10.1111/j.1526-4637.2011.01243.x>