



Breathing techniques



To introduce the girls to a meditation technique that will help them to manage their emotions



5-10 minutes



Maltesers



What to do



One of the tools we can use to build our resilience is 'self-calming'. That means being able to calm our minds and bodies when we're feeling lots of complicated emotions. This can help us to react better when things are challenging or we're feeling overwhelmed.

When we feel overwhelmed, we can breathe in too much oxygen, and it can make us feel light-headed and unwell. By breathing out for longer than we breathe in, we can reduce the amount of oxygen in our bodies and help us to feel better. We're going to try an activity to help us to control our breathing when we're feeling overwhelmed."

- Ask the group to lie down on their back and give them some time to settle and quieten down. Give them some time to get comfortable.



Now, close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing."



Note: For Brownies, try using "Breathe in for three and out for four" - this is easier for them to achieve.



- Breathe in deeply for five seconds
- Breathe out deeply for six seconds
- We're going to repeat this a few times - so, breathe in. Now breathe out. Breathe in, breathe out
- Imagine that each thought that comes to you while you're focusing on your breathing is a cloud which appears above your head
- As you breathe in, notice the cloud
- As you breathe out, let the cloud dissolve."

- Repeat for a few minutes.
- Ask the girls to open their eyes again and, when they're ready, to sit up.
- Ask the group:
 - How do you feel now?
 - When might you use this technique? (eg when you're feeling upset, or anxious or panicky)



You can use this technique whenever you might feel overwhelmed or anxious and need some time to order your emotions. Practising breathing like this regularly will help you to remember how to do it when things are tough. We're going to practise this technique now using Maltesers by lying on our back and blowing the Maltesers into the air."

- Give everyone a few Maltesers each to try with, in case they drop them on the floor. Ask the girls not to eat the Maltesers just yet! Get everyone to lie back down on the floor, and place the Maltesers over their closed mouths. When they're ready, get the girls to practise blowing the Maltesers into the air - see who can blow out the longest and keep it floating, or who can make the Malteser go the highest?

- Leave the girls to practise doing this for a few minutes before moving on to the next activity. When you finish, let them eat the Maltesers!



Note: Blowing a piece of card into the air can work as an alternative if girls cannot eat chocolate. If this is the case, do this for the whole unit, rather than just one girl.

