

## Deep Breathing

### Regulating Emotions with RULER

#### Video 6

Deep breathing is a strategy that is always available to us to help us manage our emotions. Tuning in with our breath calms our body and decreases stress. It also can help us think more clearly before we respond to others, which may improve our relationships. Practicing deep breathing can help us to handle everyday emotions with greater resilience.

**Activity Summary:** In this activity, staff will practice deep breathing - an action strategy that is readily available to us to calm our bodies and help us think more clearly when we experience intense emotions.

#### Materials

- Mood Meter

**Time:** 20 minutes (including time to watch the video)

#### Facilitator Directions

1. Ask staff to check in on the Mood Meter. Remind them to think about how pleasant or unpleasant they are feeling and how much energy they have in their bodies.

Say:

*"We are checking in on the Mood Meter now so that we have a baseline to refer back to after we go through the following exercise."*

2. Say:

*"Deep breathing is a strategy that is always available to us to help us manage our emotions. Tuning in with our breath calms our body and decreases stress. It also can help us think more clearly before we respond to others, which may improve our relationships. Practicing deep breathing can help us when we feel activated as well as handle everyday emotions with greater resilience."*

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#### Facilitator Directions

3. Guide the breathing exercise using the following script:

*"Please sit comfortably with tall posture. If you feel comfortable, close your eyes or let your gaze float downward. When I begin counting, inhale deeply until I reach the number 4. Then, hold your breath for 4 seconds as I count. When I begin counting backward from 4, slowly exhale until I reach 1 again. If it helps, you can place your hands on your stomach as you inhale and exhale deeply, feeling your breath fill your body."*

*"We will repeat this practice for several breaths, five or more, noticing when you start to feel a sense of calm in your body. Slowly inhale through the nose for 1-2-3-4. Hold for 1-2-3-4. Slowly exhale for 4-3-2-1. Let's repeat two more times."*

4. Debrief:

Ask staff how they are feeling after the exercise, noting the energy and pleasantness they feel in their body. Ask them to plot themselves on the Mood Meter, again. Do they notice any difference? Prompt staff to share about the experience with a partner or the group, and discuss when they could see themselves using this deep breathing strategy with youth.