



# Nature Breathing

**Adults:** Read the prompts below aloud while the kids give it a try.

**Take it nice and slow**, leaving plenty of time to focus on each breath.

## Warm-up

Explore the Gardens until you find a good place to sit. Take a moment to allow your body to settle into a comfortable position. We are going to practice deep breathing in nature. These practices can be very soothing in times of stress.



Close your eyes and take a deep breath in through your nose. **Breathe in** and imagine that you are smelling a flower with the most delicious smell. When you can't breathe in any more, breathe out through your mouth slowly. **Breathe out** and pretend that you are blowing up a balloon. Do these breaths 3 times. Each time, pretend to smell your flower and then blow up your balloon.

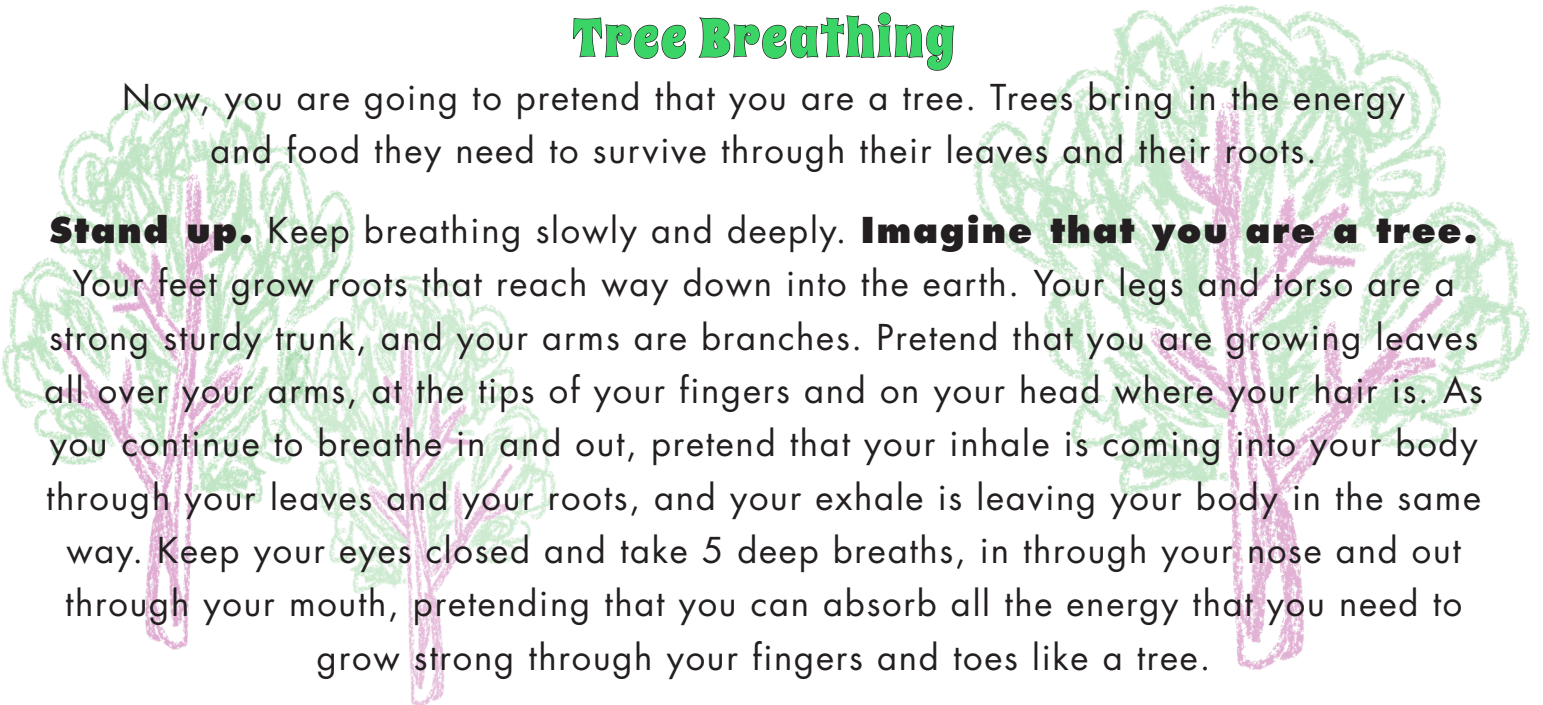


## Tree Breathing

Now, you are going to pretend that you are a tree. Trees bring in the energy and food they need to survive through their leaves and their roots.

**Stand up.** Keep breathing slowly and deeply. **Imagine that you are a tree.**

Your feet grow roots that reach way down into the earth. Your legs and torso are a strong sturdy trunk, and your arms are branches. Pretend that you are growing leaves all over your arms, at the tips of your fingers and on your head where your hair is. As you continue to breathe in and out, pretend that your inhale is coming into your body through your leaves and your roots, and your exhale is leaving your body in the same way. Keep your eyes closed and take 5 deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth, pretending that you can absorb all the energy that you need to grow strong through your fingers and toes like a tree.



## When you are ready to explore a little farther, take a walk out to the ocean to look for whales!

From November to February, the California Gray Whales can be seen migrating south to Baja where the pregnant females give birth. Gray whales rarely make a splash at the surface of the ocean. They calmly breathe through their blowholes on the top of their heads and then dive back under water. When they surface you might see a tall spout of water as they breathe out. While under water, a Gray Whale can hold its breath for 20-30 minutes! It can be a long wait to see a whale, that's why while you are whale watching it is also a perfect time to practice deep breathing.

### Whale Breathing

Find a comfortable place to sit or stand near the ocean. Close your eyes and breathe deeply. **Imagine that you are a whale.** Your entire body has a thick layer of blubber to keep you warm and instead of walking on land, you glide through water.



As you breathe slowly and deeply imagine that your breath is coming in through your back right between your shoulder blades and going out from the same place. After 3 slow breaths pretend to breathe out forcefully through your blowhole until your lungs are completely empty of air and then take a long slow breath in. With your lungs full, hold your breath and count to 8. Then slowly exhale. **Try this whale breath 3 times.**

### Other types of Nature Breathing

#### Bunny Breathing

Take 3 quick sniffs through your nose and one long exhale through your nose.

#### Snake Breathing

Inhale slowly through your nose and breathe out through your mouth with a long, slow hissing sound.



Sprouts

**A family education program at the  
Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens**