

## Six Ways of Calming the Brain and Body

- 1. Belly Breathing:** Breathe deeply, causing the stomach to expand. Make inhalation and exhalation the same duration if possible. Consider using the 5-5-5 breathing pattern: Inhale for five seconds, exhale for five seconds, pause for five seconds. Repeat pattern for five cycles or longer.
- 2. Heart Meditation:** Place one hand on your heart, the other hand on your stomach. Now, think of a person, animal, or place that you love while focusing your attention on your heart and breathing deeply.
- 3. Mindfulness:** Place all your attention on a sound, a word, an image, or your breath.
- 4. Body Sensations:** Focus on your body and its sensations. First, place full attention on your feet. Then slowly shift your focus to anything that you notice in your body.
- 5. Body Pressure:** Put gentle pressure on your arms, legs, and head. Use your right hand to put pressure on your left arm and leg and then use your left hand to put pressure on your right arm and leg. Put gentle pressure on your forehead and on the back of your head. Vigorously rub your arms and legs.
- 6. Progressive Body Relaxation:** Tighten and relax different areas of the body. Here is a very abbreviated version:
  - Inhale. Tighten your feet. Release. Exhale. . .
  - Inhale. Tighten your legs. Release. Exhale. . .
  - Inhale. Tighten your stomach. Release. Exhale. . .
  - Inhale. Tighten your hands, arms, and shoulders. Release. Exhale. . .
  - Inhale. Tighten your face and neck. Release. Exhale. . .
  - Inhale. Tighten your whole body. Release. Exhale. . .