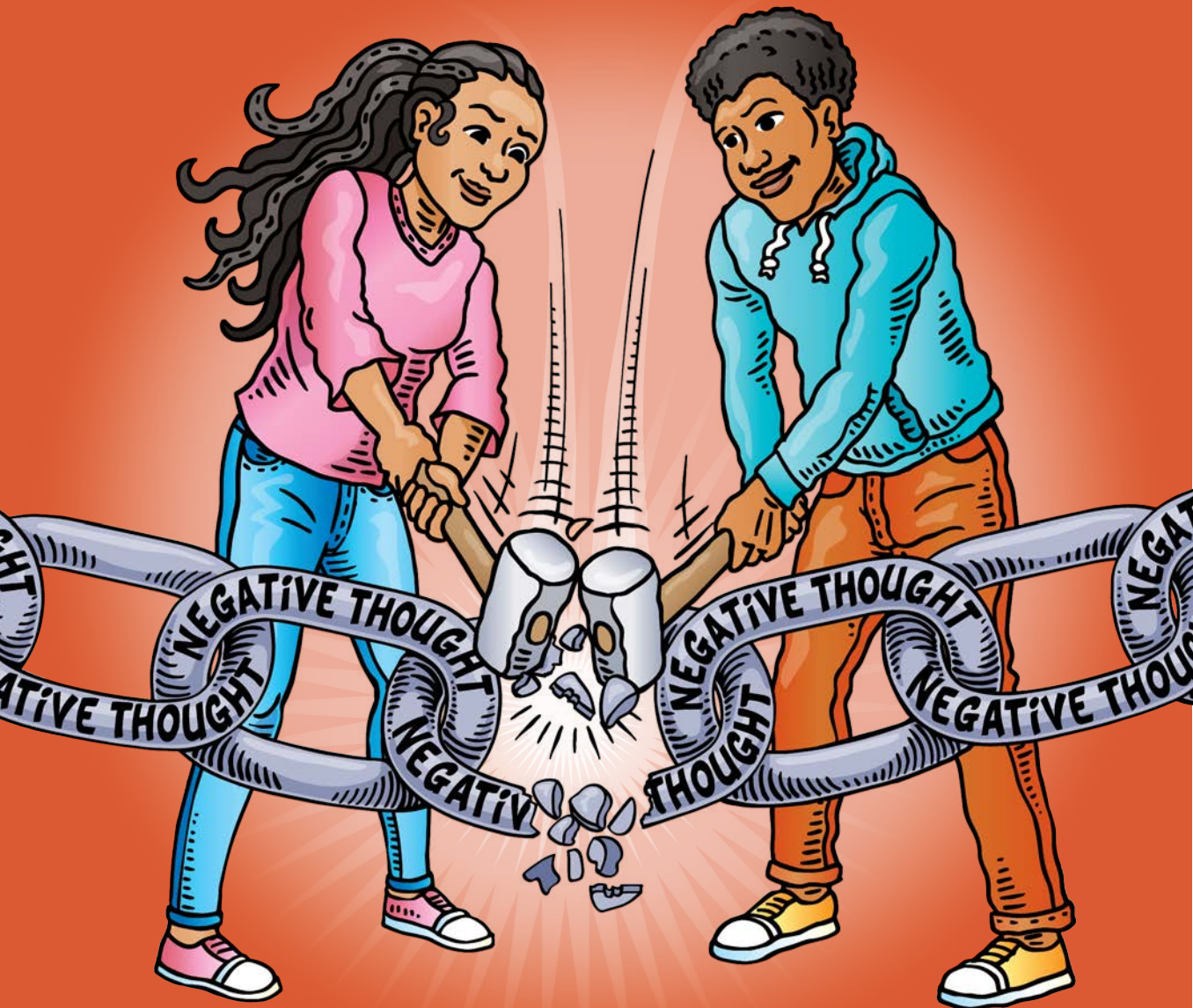


# Stress and me



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# Stress and me



## Important information

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# Stress or worry?



What is stressing you out?

Make a list of all the things that are stressing you out.

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## Remember

Stress = fight and flight in the body

Worry =

- Negative thoughts
- Uncertain things
- About the future

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# A calm state of mind



## Preparation

Download the audio file for your personal use from here: <https://cutt.ly/oBwrBfC>. Do not listen to the audio while you do anything else.

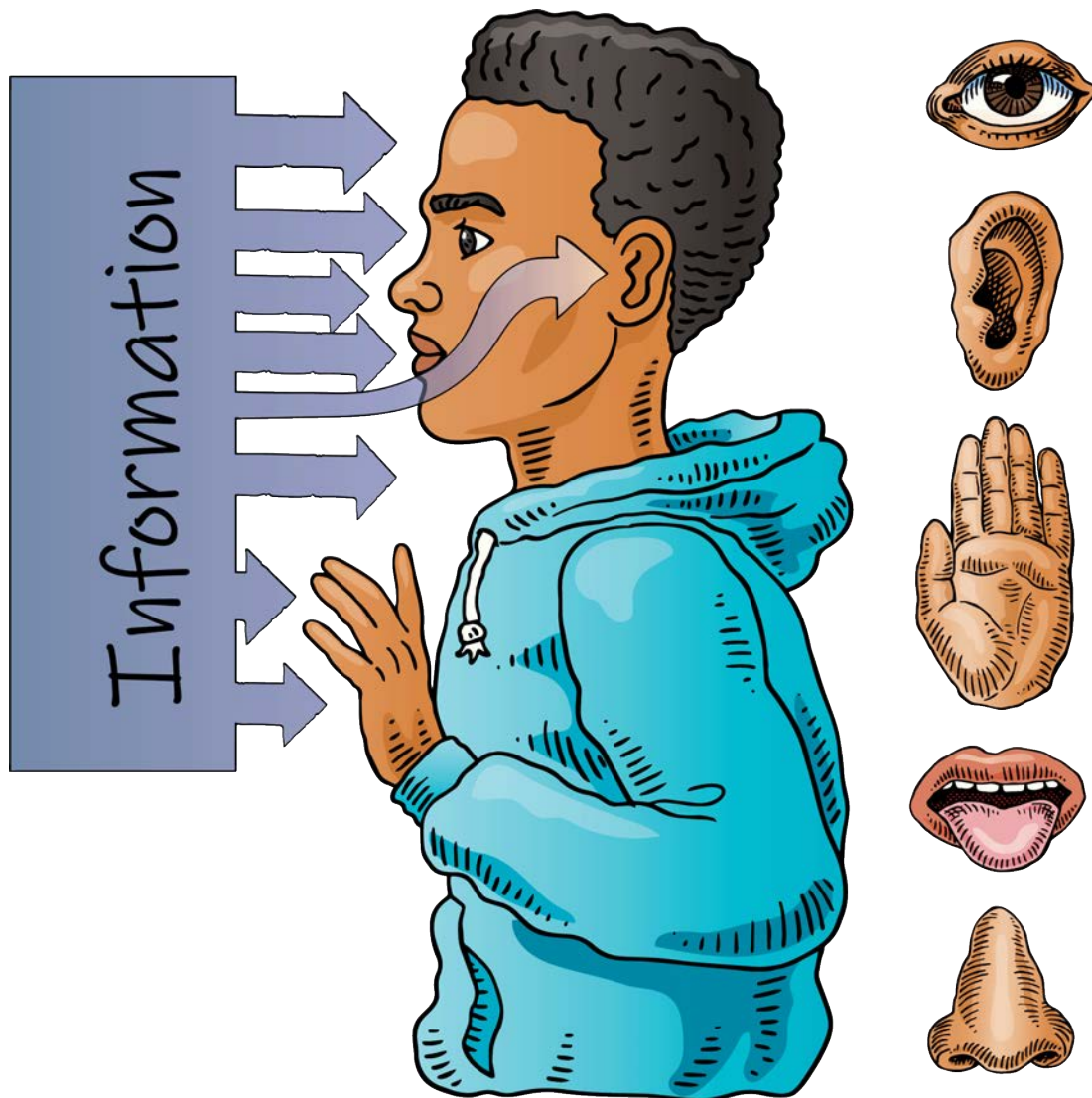
## Do

Find a quiet place and listen to the audio.

## Taking it further

Remember, at any time that situations in life are proving difficult, you can use the technique to bring your body and mind back to a positive and calm state. You can use the technique to focus yourself before you learn something, or take an exam, or do something like public speaking that might have made you worry before.

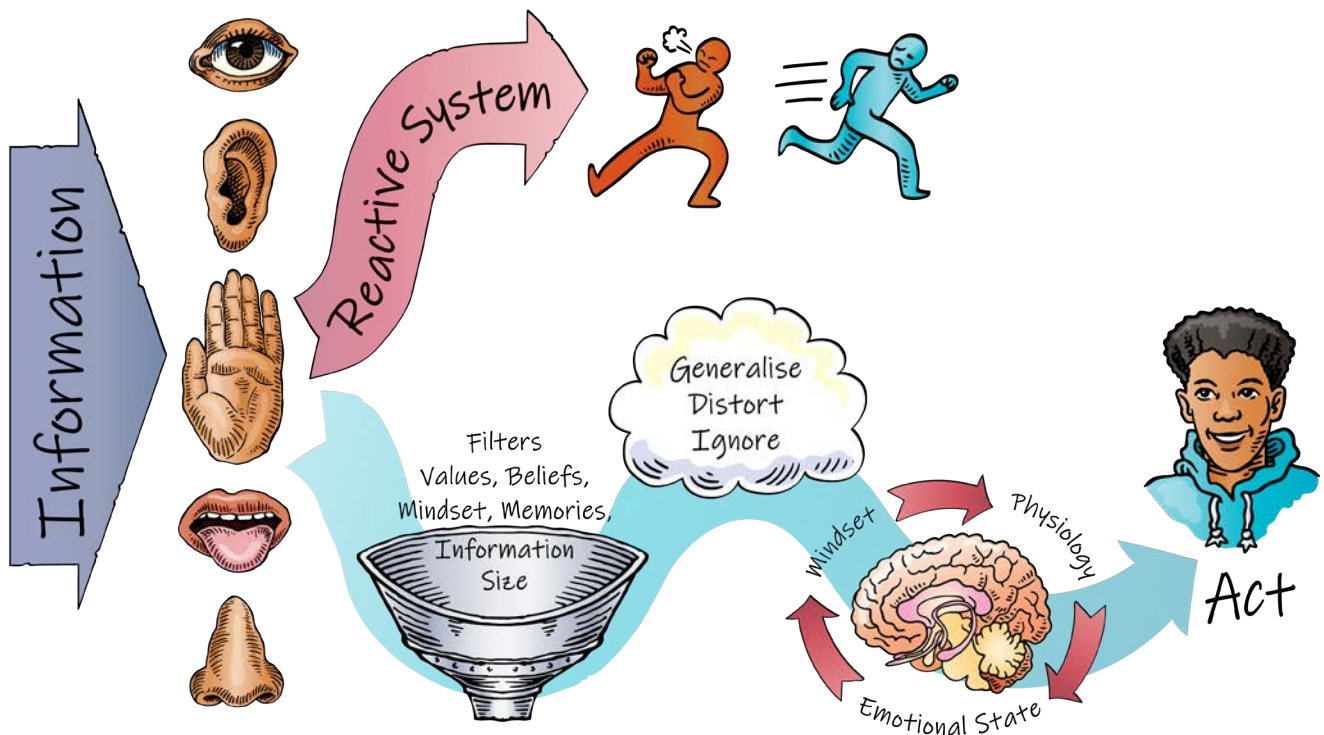
# React or respond?



## Remember

1. Fight and Flight = Reactive Mode
2. Rest and Digest = Responsive Mode
3. Stress = reaction to a life-threatening event
4. Worry & emotions  $\neq$  stress

# Reacting and responding

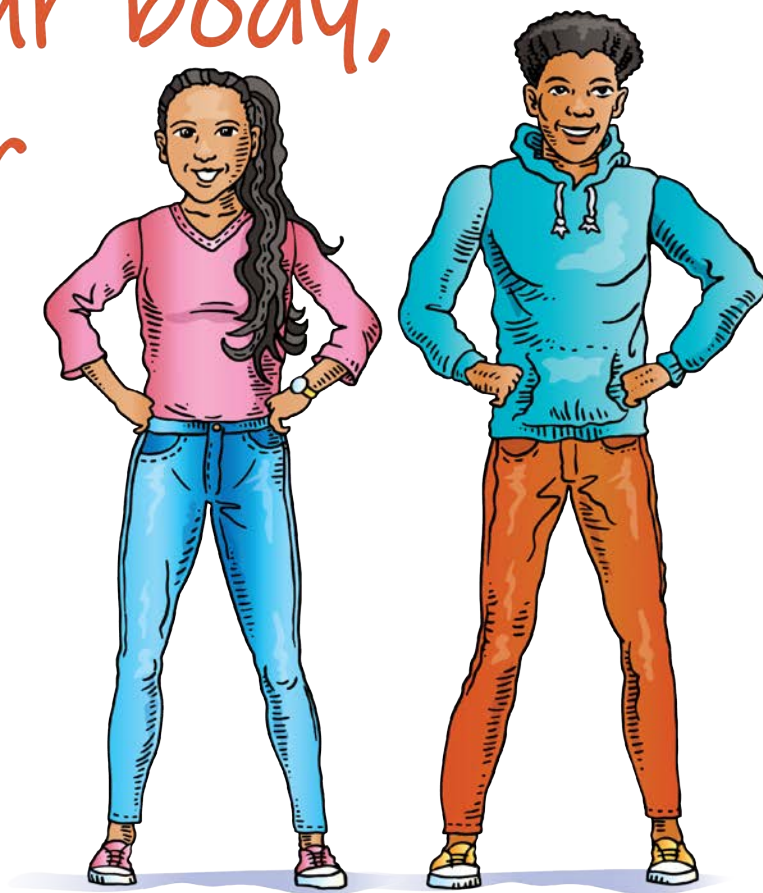


## Remember

1. Fight and Flight = Reactive Mode – keeps us safe
2. Rest and Digest = Responsive Mode – how we need to be to be healthy
3. Stress = reaction to a life-threatening event
4. Worry & emotions  $\neq$  stress



# Change your body, reduce your reaction



What did you observe?

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# Understanding our emotions



What have you ever felt before?

Write down a list of all the emotions you have ever felt.

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## More words for happy

Make a list of at least three words that mean the same as happy.

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## Emotion log table

Emotion	Positive or Negative	How intense is the emotion? Low/Medium/High	Other similar words for the emotion
Happy	Positive	Medium	Ecstatic, content, delighted
Angry	Negative	High	Cross, annoyed, frustrated, grumpy
Hurt		Medium	

# Be here, now



## Take a moment to stop what you are doing

- Focus on what you can see around you – the colours, shapes, light, textures. Just look at them, become aware of them.
- Now focus on what you can hear – the sounds around you. Just become aware of them. No need to think about them.
- Next focus on what you can smell. Bring all your attention to the smells.
- And now become aware of the touch of the clothes on your body, the heat or cool of the place you are in. Just sit and be aware.
- And when you are ready, go about your life in a calmer, stiller, more relaxed way.

# All about worry



## Get perspective on your worry

Ask yourself these questions.

1. What exactly am I worried about?
2. What is the **factual evidence** that this will happen?
3. What is the **probability** that the worst outcome will come true?
4. What can we **do** that would prevent this happening?

What do you notice now about the worry you had?

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## Which worry is in your control?

Write your negative thoughts down as a list. Work through the list saying what is in your control and what is not in your control.

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## What can you do about what is in your control?

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## Attacking worries

Ask yourself these questions.

1. What exactly are you worried about?
2. What would happen if you just stopped worrying about it?
3. What is the worst thing that could happen if you did not think about this?
4. What would it be like not to worry about this?

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# Worry Budget

1. Ask yourself: What exactly are you worried about?
2. Set aside 15 minutes to worry about that **only** 15 minutes.
3. Now do something different! Dance! Sing! Smell a flower! Drink some water!

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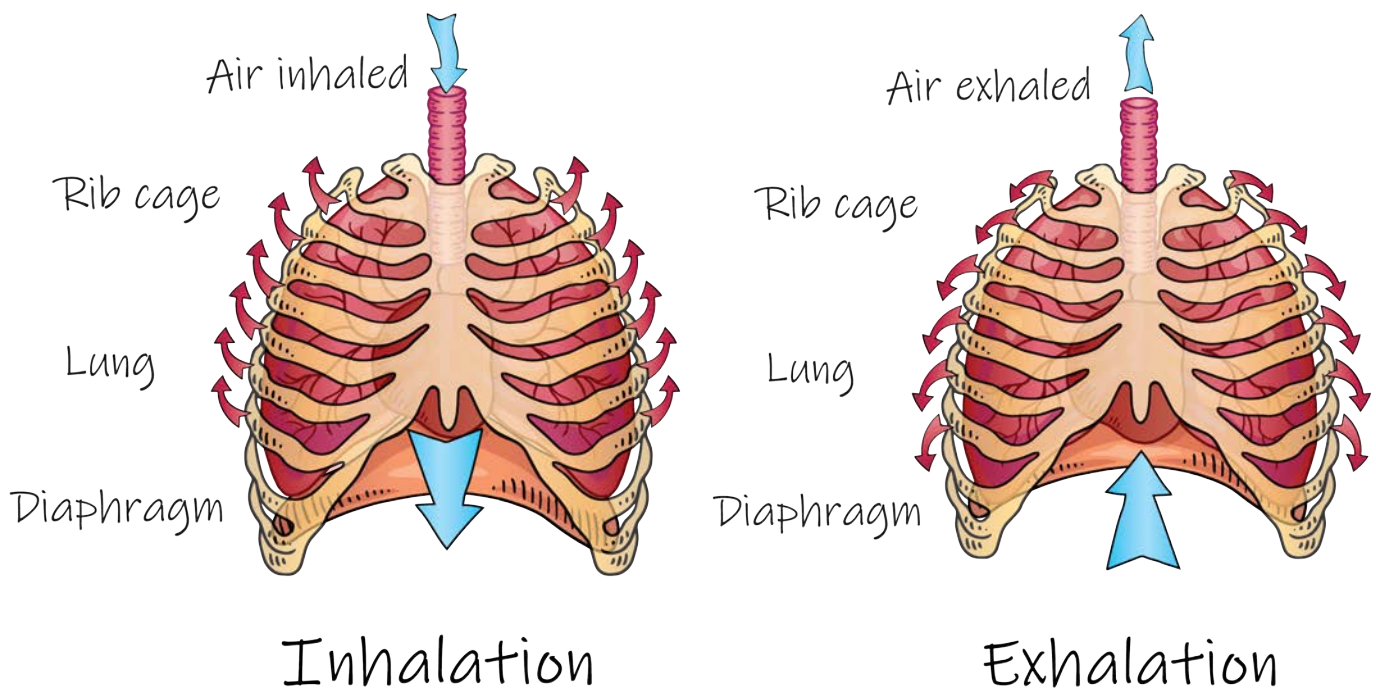
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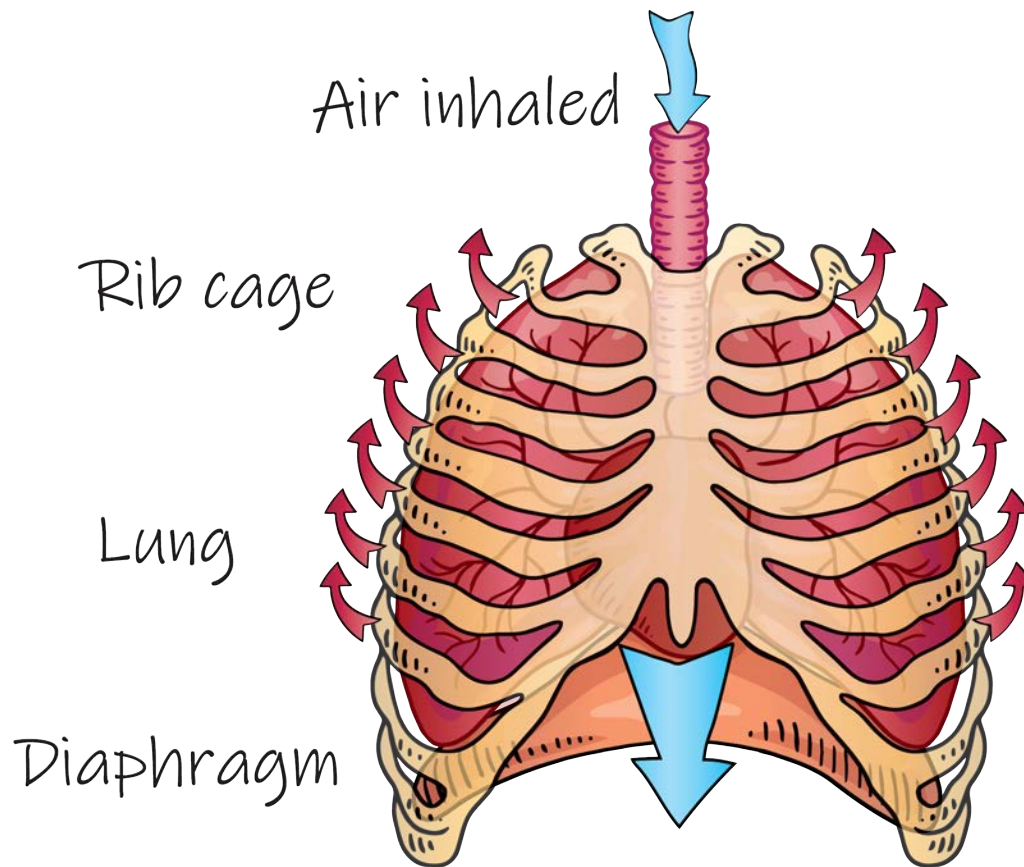
# Now just breathe



To keep yourself in Responsive Mode, you must breathe using your diaphragm.

Stand or sit in a comfortable position. Place the palm of your left hand on top of your abdomen, over your bellybutton. Now put your right hand over your left hand. You can keep your eyes open, but some people find it easier to close their eyes.

Imagine an empty balloon is inside you, just under your hands. Start to breathe in, and as you inhale imagine the air coming in through your nose, and down into the balloon, filling it up. Your hands will rise gently as you fill the balloon with air. Keep inhaling, filling the balloon right up.



## Inhalation

Notice that your rib cage and upper chest expand as your diaphragm moves down and your belly expands.

This in-breath should last for the count of one-one thousand, two-one thousand.

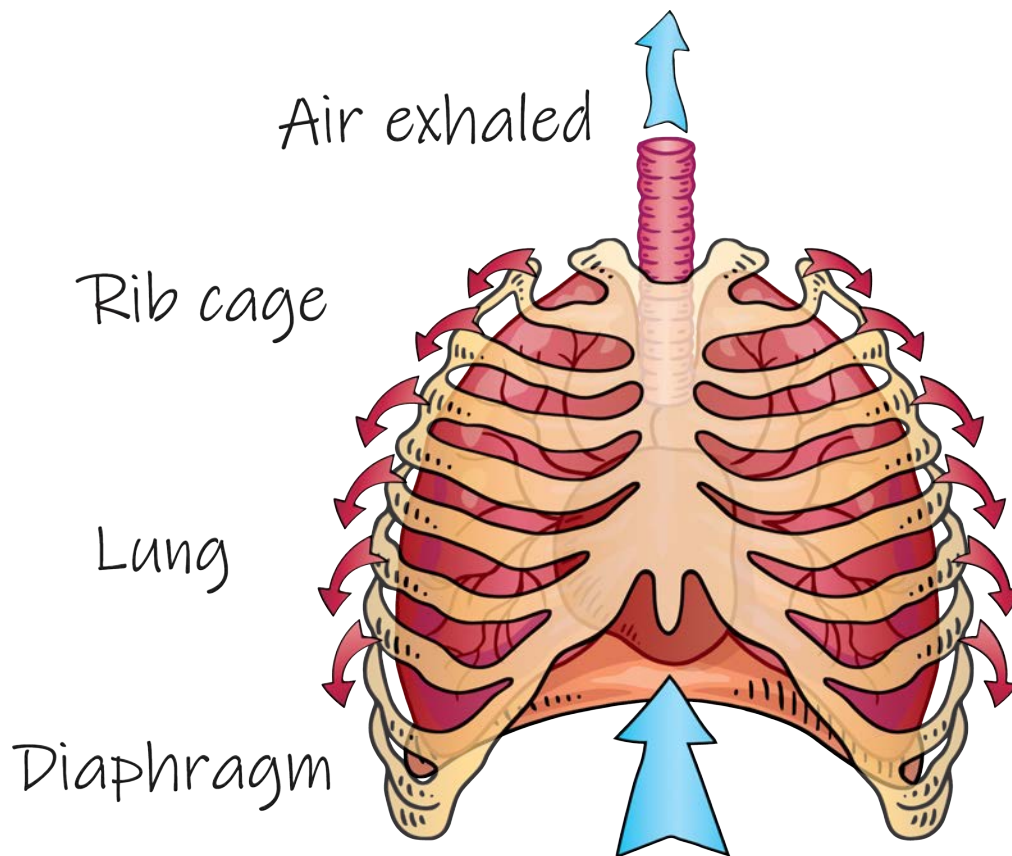
Hold your breath, holding the air inside the balloon.

Say to yourself: **My body is calm. My body is calm.**

[Take about 2 seconds]

Slowly breathe out, emptying the balloon. As you breathe out say: My body is quiet. My body is quiet.

**My body is quiet. My body is quiet.** [Take about 4 seconds].



## Exhalation

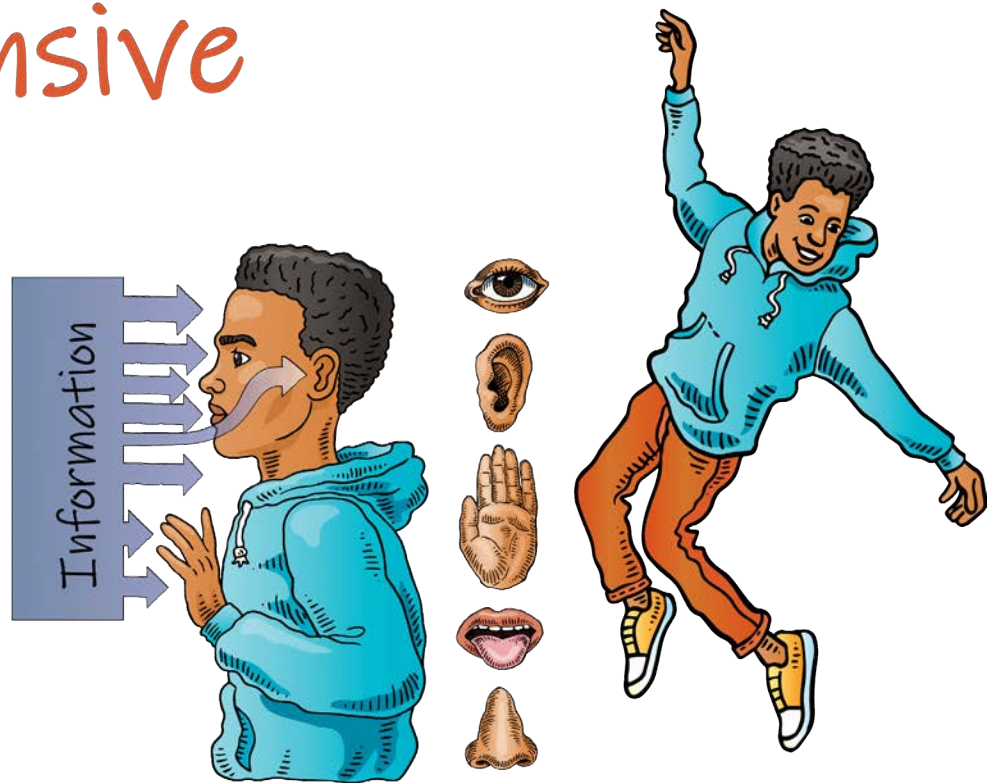
Your belly will slowly contract, and your chest and rib cage will come back down.

Repeat these steps three to five times in a row. If you feel light-headed, stop. You can try again later.

Notice how quickly your muscles start to relax, your heart rate slows down, and you feel calmer?

You can use this exercise whenever you feel that worry is overtaking you. You can also set aside a few moments twice a day to simply enjoy the benefits of being in Responsive Mode using this exercise.

# Strengthening our Responsive Modes



Each day, set aside a minute to follow these three steps.

## 1. Identify a positive experience

Think of a positive experience that you have had. It could be something physical. It might be a sense of personal achievement. It could even be the experience of being close to someone special. Become aware of the positive, warm emotions that go with the experience.

## 2. Enhance the experience

For about fifteen or twenty seconds just focus on that experience. Enjoy it. Let it fill your mind and your body. Allow the positive experience to become intense. Maybe you want to increase the intensity of the colour, sound or feelings. Just do it as though you were adjusting a television set's

sound or colour. Be aware of how personally significant this experience is to you.

### 3. Absorb it all



Imagine you are a glass of water that has had a drop of bright blue food colouring dropped into it. You know how the blue colouring slowly colours all the water? In the same way you can let the positive experience colour all of your being

and become a part of you. Just stay with it for a few more seconds.

**Notice** the positive feelings you are left with now.

### The formula for the exercise

You can access the same feelings by following this formula.

**3-1-31-12**

3 Steps

1 x a day

31 Days

12 Months

# A list of terms used in this course

**Attitude:** A way of feeling or acting toward a person, thing or situation.

**Belief:** Organising principles in your life – the rules of your life. You can believe the world is a good place or a bad place. This will give you a rule about how to approach life.

**Diaphragm:** A dome-shaped muscle that separates the chest and the abdomen. Key in breathing techniques to activate a calm state of mind.

**Empowering belief:** A belief that gives you the permission you need to take the actions you must so you can succeed.

**Fight and Flight:** Reactive Mode. When our bodies react to a threat, we go into this mode. Our heartbeats increase, breathing speeds up, digestion stops, the immune system is turned off, our vision narrows and the thinking brain is switched off.

**Filter:** A mechanism where your brain 'sifts' the information you receive through your senses. Common filters include values, beliefs, attitudes, memories and information size.

**Filter processes:** Generalisation, ignoring, distortion.

**Goal:** The object of your ambition or effort; an aim or desired result.

**Identity:** Who you are. What you believe about yourself. Shaped by your actions, beliefs and values.

**Limiting belief:** A self-imposed rule that stops you from taking the actions you need to succeed

**Mindset:** An established set of values, beliefs and attitudes.

**Peripheral vision:** The opposite of tunnel vision, when you broaden your field of vision to not only see what is right in front of you, but also what is on either side of you. It is used to activate a Responsive Mode and to achieve a calm state of mind.

**Physiology:** Your body and things that happens inside it.

**Reactive System:** The part of our brain that tells us to react to a threat.

**Resourceful emotional state:** A positive emotional state where you feel like you can be successful, you feel strong and powerful.

**Responsive System:** The thinking part of our brain.

**Rest and Digest:** Responsive Mode. When this mode is active, we can think straight, our bodies can fix damaged cells, heal, cope better with infections, and grow. Our emotional state is one of peace and calm.

**Stress:** Fight and flight in the body, in other words a physiological reaction to something in the environment that is judged by the individual to be a life-threatening event.

**Success mindset:** Believing you can respond to things in ways that will make a positive difference to your life.

**Value:** The things and ideas that you hold as important to you.

**Worry:** Takes place in the mind and happens when we keep thinking about negative things, or about uncertain outcomes or about things that could go wrong in the future.

**Worry Budget:** Setting a time limit to actively worry about something and then focusing on something else immediately afterwards.



# Notes

A series of horizontal dashed lines for writing notes.