

SELF CARE RESOURCE BINDER

Content adapted from

Boston Children's Hospital | Child Life Services

Until every child is well™

Welcome to the Self-Care Binder!

Our Emergency Department recognizes that this is a stressful time for you and your child. We want to help you and your child cope with the wait before the transition to the next place on your child's journey to feeling well. Waiting can be difficult but caregivers and patients have shared that keeping busy with their favorite activities or learning new ones can make a big difference in their stay.

Within this binder, you and your child will find many choices of offerings. This binder holds examples for coping tools that you and your child can utilize right now. They include breathing, relaxing, mindfulness, gratitude practices, exercise, and guided meditation. The activities are self-guided and can be done at any time. We hope that this can be a resource for you and your child during the ED stay and these exercises can also be learned for use during other times of stress. We recommend that you take a look now to familiarize yourself with what is available in the binder. It will be available at any time during your child's stay.

Feel free to ask questions. We are here to help!

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Index: The following is a list of items available to you and your child during the ED stay with a description of each item

Item/Description **Page**

Communication boards (All ages) **3**

Description: These pages contain communication boards with pictures and words of various items that your child may be having trouble communicating verbally. Some children may have difficulty using words to communicate at baseline. Alternatively, some children who are under stress may not want or be able to communicate verbally. These boards serve as a means for these children to communicate their needs to you and the ED team.

Mindfulness activities/activities to help decrease stress (All ages) **8**

Description: A variety of different mindfulness activities to help you and your child re-focus and to help decrease stress. Activities include mindfulness exercises, slow down/calm down, grounding technique that uses your senses to help step away from negative thoughts, breathing exercises, and finger labyrinths (mazes). We know that waiting in the ED can be stressful and we hope that some of these techniques can help you and your child cope with this stress.

Gratitude exercises (All ages) **15**

Description: We know that while your child is waiting in the ED, it can be hard to feel gratitude, but gratitude exercises can help re-focus on more positive aspects of your child's life and help you and your child feel more grounded and peaceful. This section contains a variety of gratitude exercises including positive writing prompts, gratitude activity cards, gratitude scavenger hunt plus more.

Stretching Exercises (All ages) **18**

Description: Stretching exercises can help with relaxation and mindfulness. This section includes instructions for easy to do stretching exercises that you and your child can do.

Dice Fitness (12 years and above; not recommended for patients with an eating disorder or history of an eating disorder, requires dice) **20**

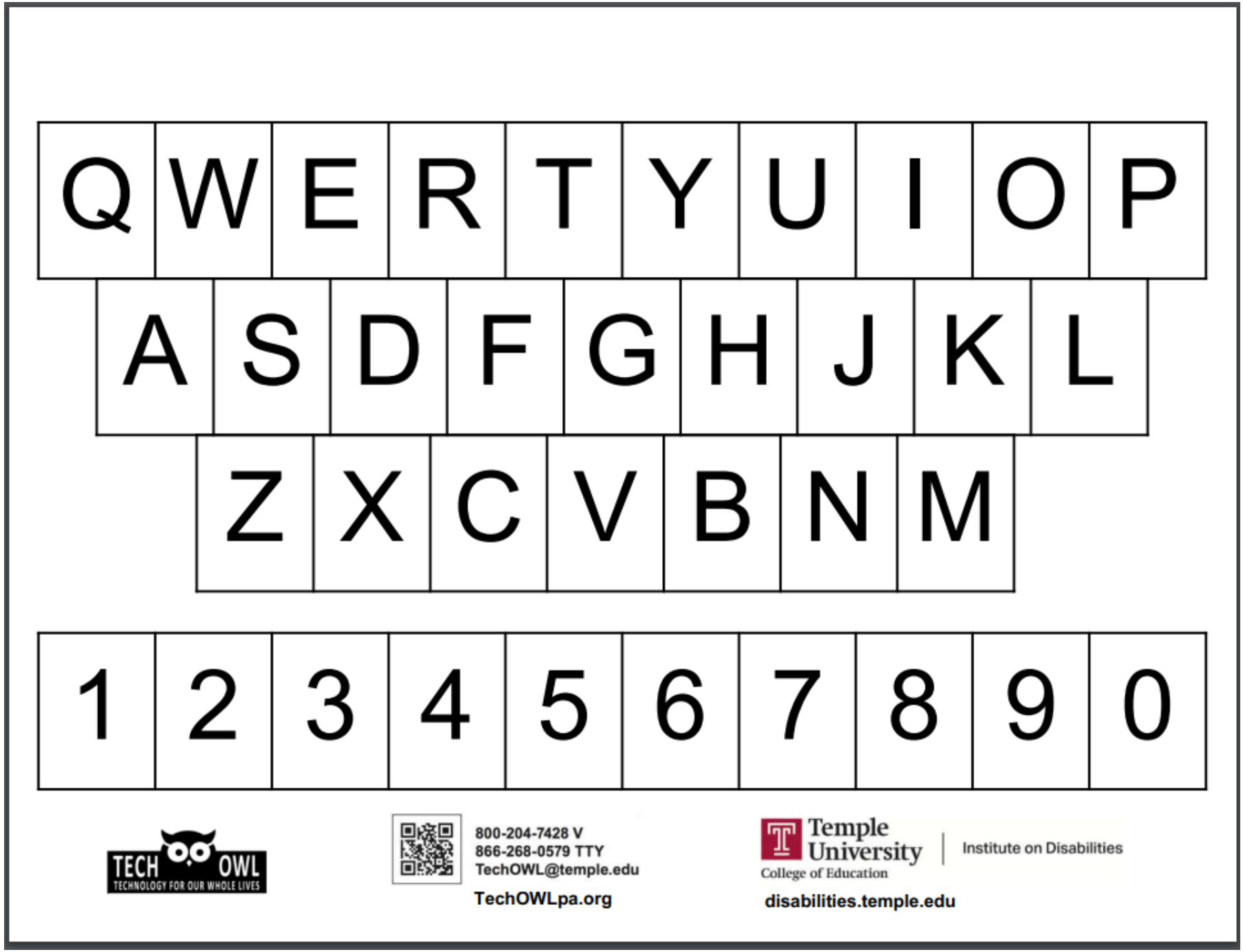
Description: This is fun activity you can do with your child in the ED room and can help with incorporating physical activity during your ED stay. You or your child roll a die (or if no dice available, you (the caregiver) can google "roll dice" on your smart phone and it will roll a die for you). The first dice roll tells what column to look at and the second dice roll tells which row to look at. The cross section of the two is an exercise. Complete the exercise in that particular box. If the activity is completed, the combination of the dice rolls are the player's points for that round. So for example if you roll a 1 and a 2, you would do the 20 high knees exercise and receive 3 points for doing it

Communication Boards

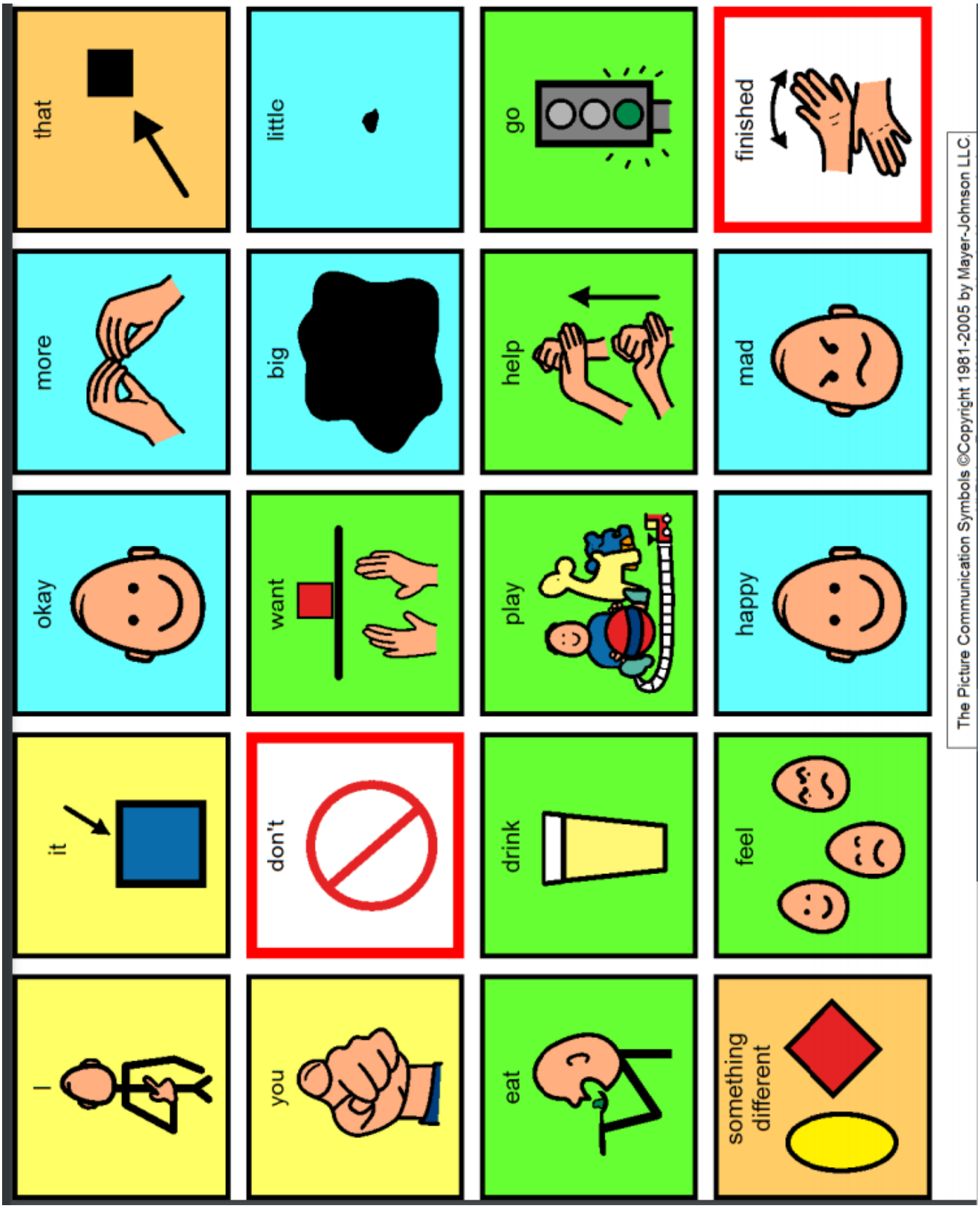
Choose a board below based on your child's ability. When you and your child first use the board, introduce the child to the board and ask them if they would like to use the board. If they choose to use the board, walk through each square and what it represents. Be patient and take your time to explain each square- your child may need you to speak more slowly than normal to absorb each square. If you or your child is overwhelmed or cannot use the board, stop reviewing the board and put it away. Thank the child for trying and let them know they can choose if they want to try again another time.

(Source: Temple University Institute of Disabilities, https://techowlpa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-Core-Board_FINAL.pdf)




Q W E R T Y U I O P
A S D F G H J K L
Z X C V B N M
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0
TECH OWL
TECHNOLOGY FOR OUR WHOLE LIVES
800-204-7428 V
866-268-0579 TTY
TechOWL@temple.edu
TechOWLpa.org
Temple University
College of Education
Institute on Disabilities
disabilities.temple.edu

(Source: Temple University Institute of Disabilities, https://aaccommunity.net/2017/11/start-with-a-little-or-a-lot-introducing-core-boards/)



Mindfulness Activities

1-Minute Mindfulness Exercises



1. **Yawn and stretch for 10 seconds every hour.**
   Do a fake yawn if you have to. That will trigger real ones. Say “ahh” as you exhale. Notice how a yawn interrupts your thoughts and feelings. This brings you into the present.
   Then stretch really, really slowly for at least 10 seconds. Notice any tightness and say “ease” or just say hello to that place (being mindful — noticing without judgment). Take another 20 seconds to notice and then get back to what you were doing.

2. **Three hugs, three big breaths exercise.**
   Hug someone tight and take 3 big breaths together. Even if they don’t breathe with you, your breathing will ground them

3. **Stroke your hands.**
   Lower or close your eyes. Take the index finger of your right hand and slowly move it up and down on the outside of your fingers. Once you have mindfully stroked your left hand, swap and let your left hand stroke the fingers of your right hand.

4. **Mindfully eat a something.**
   Take a raisin or a piece of chocolate and mindfully eat it. Slow down, sense it, savor it and smile between bites. Purposefully slow down. Use all your senses to see it, touch it, smell it, and sense it.

   Then gently pop it into your mouth and really savor it. Savor its texture, its taste, how it feels in your mouth. Let it linger and then swallow it. After you have swallowed it, let your lips turn up slightly and smile. Do the same thing for each raisin you eat or bite you take.

5. **Clench your fist and breathe into your fingers.**
   Position your fingers and thumbs facing down. Now clench your fist tightly. Turn your hand over so your fingers and thumbs are facing up and breathe into your fist. Notice what happens.

6. **STOP.**
   Stand up and breathe. Feel your connection to the earth.
   Tune in to your body. Lower your gaze. Scan your body and notice physical sensations or emotions. Discharge any unpleasant sensations, emotions or feelings on the out breath. Notice any pleasant ones and let them fill you up on the in breath.
   Observe. Lift your eyes and take in your surroundings. Observe something in your environment that is pleasant and be grateful for it and its beauty.
   Possibility. Ask yourself what is possible or what is new or what is a forward step.

If you find yourself being reactive, try the following steps:
Pause and take one to three big breaths.
Say “step back.” (You don’t have to physically step back, you can just do it in your mind.)
Say “clear head.”
Say “calm body.”
Breathe again. Say “relax,” “melt” or “ease.”

7. **Mindful breathing for one minute.**
   Lower your eyes and notice where you feel your breath. That might be the air going in and out at your nostrils or the rise and fall of your chest or stomach. If you can’t feel anything, place your hand on your stomach and notice how your hand gently rises and falls with your breath. If you like, you can just lengthen the in breath and the out breath or just breathe naturally. Your body knows how to breathe.
   Focus on your breath. When your mind wanders, as it will do, just bring your attention back to your breath. You might like to say ‘thinking’ when you notice your thoughts and just gently shepherd your attention back to your breath.

   This can be done for longer than one minute. However, even for one minute it will allow you to pause and be in the moment. Or you might just like to breathe out stress on the out breath and breathe in peace on the in breath.

8. **Loving-kindness meditation.**
   For one minute, repeat ‘May I be happy, may I be well, may I be filled with kindness and peace.’ You can substitute “you” for “I” and think of someone you know and like, or just send love to all people.

9. **An aspiration.**
   Decide on an aspiration. Just ask yourself this question: What is my heart’s aspiration? Pause for about 20 seconds. Do this a second or third time and write down what comes. Perhaps it is to come from love, or to be kind to yourself or others or to be patient.
   Once you decide which aspiration you like best, say that at the beginning of the day. This will set you up for your day and your interactions with others (and even with yourself).

SLOW DOWN & CALM DOWN

First - Take 3 slow belly breaths.



5 List 5 things you can SEE.

4 List 4 things you can FEEL.





3 List 3 things you can HEAR.

2 List 2 things you can SMELL.





1 List 1 things you can TASTE.

Finished? Take another 3 slow belly breaths.

Grounding Technique with Your Feet (Planting)

- Place your feet on the floor, shoulder width apart.
- You can sit or stand if it is safe.
- You can wear socks, or socks and shoes, or be barefoot if it is safe.
- Feel the soles of your feet connect with the ground. Feel stationary, feel paused.
- Notice the cool floor, if your feet are bare.
- Imagine the connection of your feet to the earth below.
- This is your space. Your place.
- Practice deep, slow breathing.
- Imagine sending your inhales to the place in your body that needs them the most (eg. chest for panic, body part in pain, etc.)
- Inhale peace and calm, exhale negativity and stress.

- Modifications can include lying down on the bed or floor, if safe.

- Additional elements can be: guided imagery, ice objects (ice bags, frozen washcloths, etc), breathing exercises or props (pinwheel).

- For patients sitting up in bed, grounding via hands on the bedside rails is an option.

Breathing exercises (Source: https://childhood101.com/fun-breathing-exercises-for-kids/)

BALLOON BREATHING



Sitting in a comfortable position, place your hands around your mouth as if you were about to blow up a balloon. Take a deep breath in through the nose and, as your slowly exhale through your mouth, start to spread your hands out as if you are blowing up a great big balloon. Hold your hand position as you inhale again and then spread your hands further as you exhale. Once your balloon is as big as it can be, gently sway from side to side as you release your balloon up into the sky.

SHOULDER ROLL BREATHING



Choose a comfortable sitting position. As you take a slow deep breath in through your nose raise your shoulders up towards your ears. Breathe slowly out through your mouth, lowering your shoulders as you exhale. Repeat slowly, rolling your shoulders up and down in time with your breath.

TAKE 5 BREATHING



Sit comfortably, resting one hand in front of you with fingers outstretched like a star and the pointer finger of your other hand ready to trace your hand. Starting at the base of your thumb on the outside of your hand, breathe in slowly through your nose as you slide your pointer finger up to the top of your thumb. Breathe out slowly and slide your pointer finger down the inside of your thumb. Breathe in as you slide your finger up the next finger and out as you slide down. Continue breathing in and out as you trace your whole hand.

BUMBLEBEE BREATHING

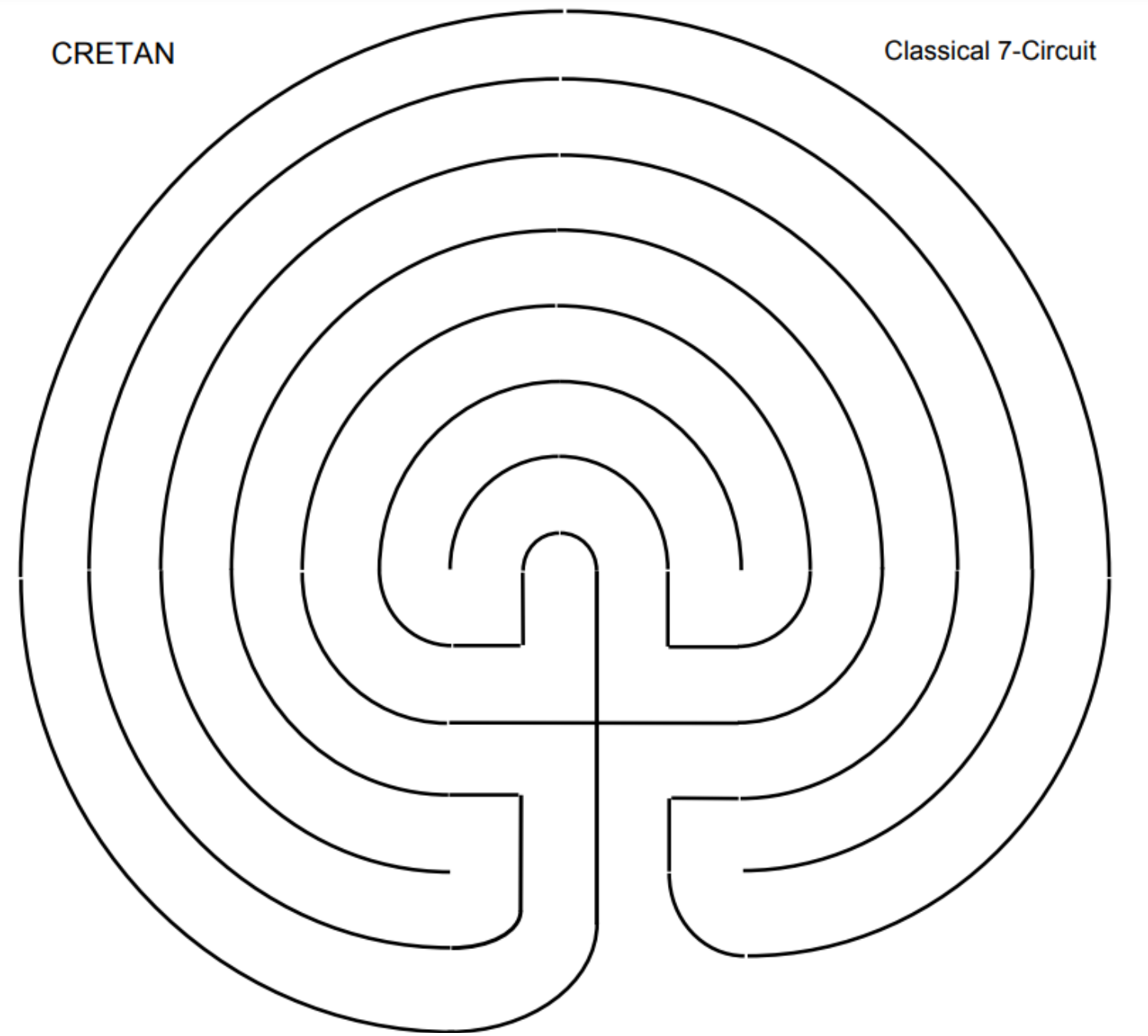


Sitting comfortably, gently place the tips of your pointer fingers in your ears and close your eyes. Breathe in through your nose and then hum quietly as you slowly breathe out.

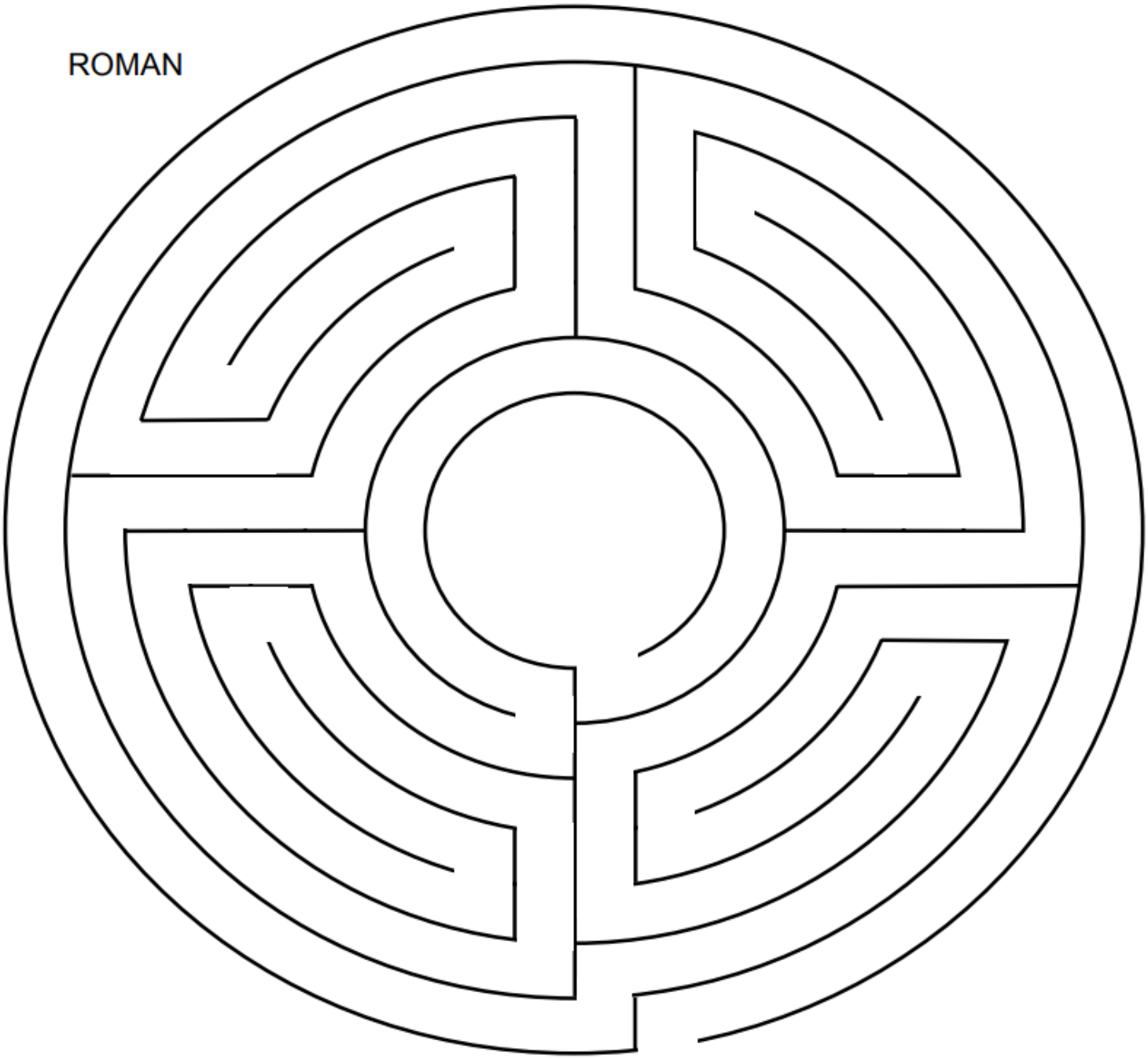
Finger Labyrinth (Source: https://www.relax4life.com/download-paper-finger-labyrinths/)

How to use a finger labyrinth: The labyrinths below have a single path that you can trace with your finger. Start at the opening at the bottom and trace your finger through the path to the middle. When you get to the middle, take a deep breath and then trace your finger back out. Repeat as often as you would like to help feel more calm.

If you would like to use this exercise, just ask for your own personal printable copy to trace.



ROMAN



(Source: https://labyrinthsociety.org/download-a-labyrinth, Original drawing by Robert Ferre, Final Graphic by Vicki Keiser)



Gratitude Exercises

Definition of Gratitude:

The quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.

Synonyms of Gratitude:

gratefulness, thankfulness, recognition, and appreciation

Why do Gratitude Exercises:

More positive thinking, more grounded and peaceful, Increased happiness, reduced materialism, improved self-esteem, improved physical health, increased mental strength, and better relationships with others.

Positive Writing prompts—

I like myself because_____
I consider myself a good _____
I feel good about _____
My f avo rite p lace is _____
I be li eve in _____
My friends will tell me that I am a great _____
I am in ch a rg e of _____

EXERCISES OF GRATITUDE

1. Write letters of thanks to friends or family.

2. Draw a picture of something you are grateful for.

3. Tell someone "thank you"

4. Make a family tree and write one nice thing about each person.

5. Make a gratitude affirmation dice. Assign one thing you are grateful for to each number. Roll the dice and repeat that affirmation out loud. If no dice is available, you can also google "roll dice" on your parent's smart phone and it will roll a die for you.

6. Think of a time you were happy.

7. Think of a place that makes you happy.

GRATITUDE SCAVENGER HUNT

- List something that you are grateful for in nature.
- Name something that you eat that tastes good.
- Think of something that has an enjoyable smell.
- Think of something that reminds you of a loved one.
- Name something that makes you feel unique.
- Think of something that you find useful to you.
- Name something that makes a beautiful sound.
- Name something that comes in your favorite color.



Stretching Exercises Adapted from:

Boston Children's Hospital | Family Wellness
Hale Family Center for Families | Program

Diaphragmatic "Belly" Breathing



- Place one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest
- Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth
- Focus on breathing into your belly so that you can feel the hand on your stomach move out away from you
- Try to keep the hand on your chest still
- Repeat this cycle for 3 minutes



- Bend right ear to right shoulder
- Feel a stretch on left side of neck
- Hold for 30 seconds then repeat on the other side

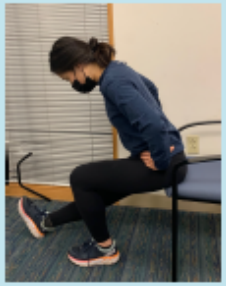




- Place both feet on the floor and hands on top the top of your knees
- Breathe in, look down at your stomach and round your back
- Breathe out, arch your back and look up toward the ceiling
- Do this 10 times each



- Straighten arms, raise them to the side to shoulder height
- Squeeze shoulder blades together
- Hold for 10 seconds, repeat 10 times



- Straighten right leg
- Lean forward until stretch is felt in the back of your leg
- Hold for 30 seconds then repeat on the other side



- Reach right hand to the left side of the chair
- Reach left hand behind chair
- Turn the upper body to the left, keeping knees and hips forward
- Hold for 30 seconds then repeat on the other side



- Reach right hand overhead and lean to the left
- Feel a stretch on the right side of your body
- Hold for 30 seconds then repeat on the other side



- Place left ankle over right knee or shin
- Lean forward until stretch is felt in hips
- Hold for 30 seconds then repeat on the other side



- Stand behind a chair or near a stable surface
- Standing tall, bring right heel to bottom and hold right ankle with right hand until a stretch is felt in the front of your leg
- Hold for 30 seconds and repeat on the other side



- Stand behind a chair or near a stable surface
- Place right foot in front of left foot
- Bend right leg, keeping the left leg straight
- Lean forward, while keeping feet flat on the floor until a stretch is felt in your calf
- Hold for 30 seconds and repeat on the other side

Dice Fitness

DICE FITNESS

Roll the first dice to select the column and roll the second dice to select the row. Complete the exercise in that particular box. If you complete the exercise, the number on your dice is your score.

						
	**Double Rest 0 Points**	10 Burpees	20 Butt Kicks	15 Sit-Ups	8 Tricep Dips	10 Lunges
	20 High Knees	**Double Rest 0 Points**	10 Push-Ups	10 Bicycle Crunches	5 Jumping Squats	30 Second Plank
	10 Mountain Climbers	20 Calf Raises (L) & 20 Calf Raises (R)	**Double Rest 0 Points**	20 Crunches	10 Jumping Jacks	Jog in Place for 1 minute
	30 Second Plank	10 Bicycle Crunches	15 Sit-Ups	**Double Rest 0 Points**	20 Butt Kicks	8 Tricep Dips
	10 Squats	10 Jumping Jacks	10 Mountain Climbers	10 Burpees	**Double Rest 0 Points**	20 Calf Raises (L) & 20 Calf Raises (R)
	Run in Place for 1 minute	10 Squats	10 Push-Ups	5 Jumping Squats	10 Jumping Jacks	**Double Rest 0 Points**