



the well-being of each benefits all



Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



How to Use the Happy Poses Cards

Stop and check: These exercises are not for those with pregnancy or major health issues. Check with a health care professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Stop with pain: If there is any pain while exercising, stop immediately. Get medical help.

Mix it up: You may vary the order of the exercises, but usually one starts with Mountain Pose and finishes with the Rest and Restore Pose.

Pick a few: For a stretch break in a classroom, workplace or recreational area, pick a few poses appropriate for your needs, location and environment.

Exercise Stations: These cards can be posted for exercise stations, so people may use them according to their own pace and schedule.

Affirmations (positive statements): Repeat to yourself the affirmations on each card. For example, in *Star Pose*, say to yourself, "I am a star!"

Shoes on or off? It can be easy to slip, especially in socks. Some people keep shoes on if there is no mat, or use bare feet.

Stand or sit: If you prefer to sit, you may modify the exercises to your needs while sitting in a chair or on the floor as is comfortable for you. Use a wall for support, or props and pillows as needed to find comfort and stability. Some of the exercises may be done while lying on the floor for more comfort.

Move slowly and breathe: Focus on the breath as you do the exercises. Generally, one breathes through the nose with the mouth closed. The breath should be slow and even. Move the body only as far as comfortable, and rest between exercises. Find comfort and stability while in the poses.

Listen to your body: Never strain. If you are breathing hard through the mouth, stop and rest. Move gently and stop where your body tells you.

Time of day: It's best to do 10-15 minutes of exercise in the morning. Daily exercise is suggested, according to your body's needs.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org © Happy Poses 2019



Tips for Healthy Living

Taking proper care of yourself lets you take better care of others.

Pick healthy practices which let your best self shine.

Choose healthy habits of body.

Eat, sleep and exercise according to a regular schedule.

Exercise your body according to your needs.

Take food and water according to your body's needs.

Eat natural foods as much as possible.

Hold your body in a confident and stable way.



Choose healthy habits of mind.

Respect and care for yourself, your family and community.

Think good things about yourself and others.

Say positive statements (affirmations) to yourself and others.

Grow the happy thoughts. Let go of unhappy thoughts.

Keep a steady breath and steady mind in all you do.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Happy Poses Sequences

Ideas for exercise routines

Try these 10-15 minute exercise routines.
Be inspired to make your own sequences.

Start of day

Mountain Pose
Side Stretch
Gentle Twist
Sunrise / Sunset
Strong Pose
Squeeze and Relax
Calm Breath
Heart-full Pose

End of day

Chin Up and Down
Head Turns
Gentle Twist
Squeeze and Relax
Lion Pose
Calm Breath
Quiet Mind
Rest and Restore

Stretch break

Squeeze and Relax
Sunrise / Sunset
Side Stretch
Strong Pose
Tree Pose
Head Turns
Gentle Twist
Smile Pose

Energize

Sunrise / Sunset
Energizing Breath
Strong Pose
Star Pose
Walk-in-Place
Tree Pose
Airplane Pose
Right Nostril Breathing

Flexibility

Mountain Pose
Side Stretch
Head Turns
Gentle Twist
Chin Up and Down
Tree Pose
Airplane Pose
Mountain Pose

Balance

Left Nostril Breathing
Right Nostril Breathing
Head Turns
Gentle Twist
Strong Pose
Tree Pose
Airplane Pose
Mountain Pose

Happy Poses Sequences

Ideas for exercise routines (continued)

Relaxation

Left Nostril Breathing
Bumble Bee Breath
Head Turns
Squeeze and Relax
Lion Pose
Calm Breath
Quiet Mind
Rest and Restore

Stress and Anxiety

Mountain Pose
Sunrise / Sunset
Star Pose
Left Nostril Breathing
Calm Breath
Quiet Mind
Rest and Restore
Smile Pose

Heart-opening

Mountain Pose
Gentle Twist
Chin Up and Down
Sunrise / Sunset
Strong Pose
Calm Breath
Quiet Mind
Heart-full Pose

Confidence-building

Calm Breath
Mountain Pose
Head Turns
Star Pose
Tree Pose
Walk-in-Place
Bumble Bee Breath
Quiet Mind

Inner Peace

Calm Breath
Heart-full Pose
Strong Pose
Lion Pose
Head Turns
Chin Up and Down
Quiet Mind
Smile Pose

Building Trust & Community

Bumble Bee Breath
Heart-full Pose
Gentle Twist
Mountain Pose
Strong Pose
Tree Pose
Friendship Bridge
Forest Circle

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards

happyposes.org © Happy Poses 2019



Mountain Pose



“I stand tall inside of myself.”

Mountain Pose

Proper posture benefits the whole body

Stand with parallel feet comfortably under the body, arms along the sides. The shoulders are wide and in line with the ears. With stable feet, lengthen your whole body through the top of your head. Keep your eyes still as you breathe in and out. Stay in the pose for a few breaths.

Seated Mountain: Sit in a chair with knees placed over the ankles.

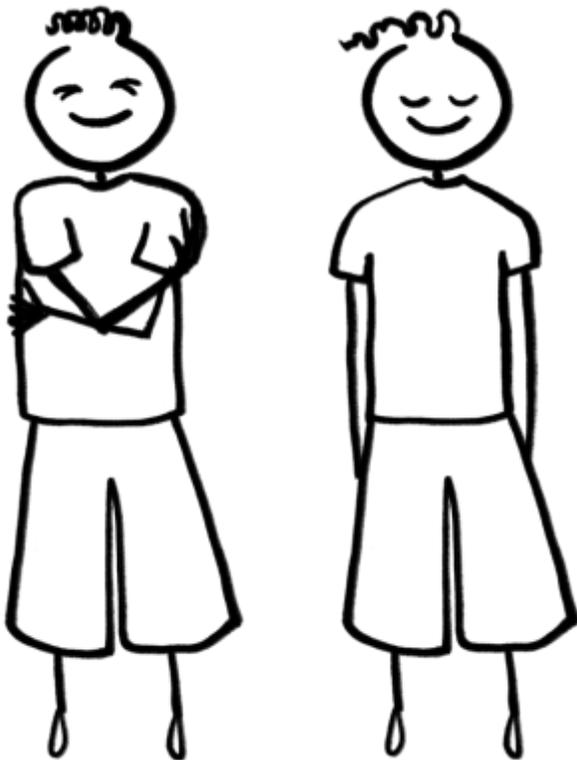
Caution: For foot, ankle or leg weakness, use a chair or wall for support.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Squeeze and Relax



“My inner light shines brightly.”

Squeeze and Relax

Release tension with awareness

With eyes closed, notice each part of your body (from the feet, legs, hands, arms, main body, up to your face.) Is there any comfort or discomfort? Breathe in and squeeze each part of the body. Breathe out and relax. Now inhale and hug the whole body. Exhale and relax. Notice where any tension remains in the body as you relax your entire self.

Caution: Go gently with injuries or pregnancy.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Calm Breath



“I am peaceful.”

Calm Breath

**Slow belly (diaphragmatic) breathing
relaxes the body**

To better relax for this breathing exercise, you may sit or lie down. Close your eyes and focus inside. Begin by slowly breathing out. Relax. Now take a slow, deep inhale. (Try to direct the air in the lungs towards the belly rather than the chest. You might even place one hand on the upper chest, and the other on the abdomen to help you direct the air in the lungs.) Notice if your inhale makes the belly become bigger. Exhale as if gently pushing air out from the belly. Repeat for a few rounds, listening to the sound of your breath. Do you feel calmer and more relaxed?

Caution: Go gently with breathing, blood pressure or heart issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Head Turns



“I breathe in what I need.”

Head Turns

A gentle stretch of the neck muscles

Stand or sit comfortably with face and body forward. Keep the shoulders and upper body in place. Inhale as you slowly turn your head to one side. Exhale to bring the face forward. Repeat on the other side (inhale turn; exhale forward). As you breathe in, say to yourself, “I breathe in what I need.” After a few rounds, relax.

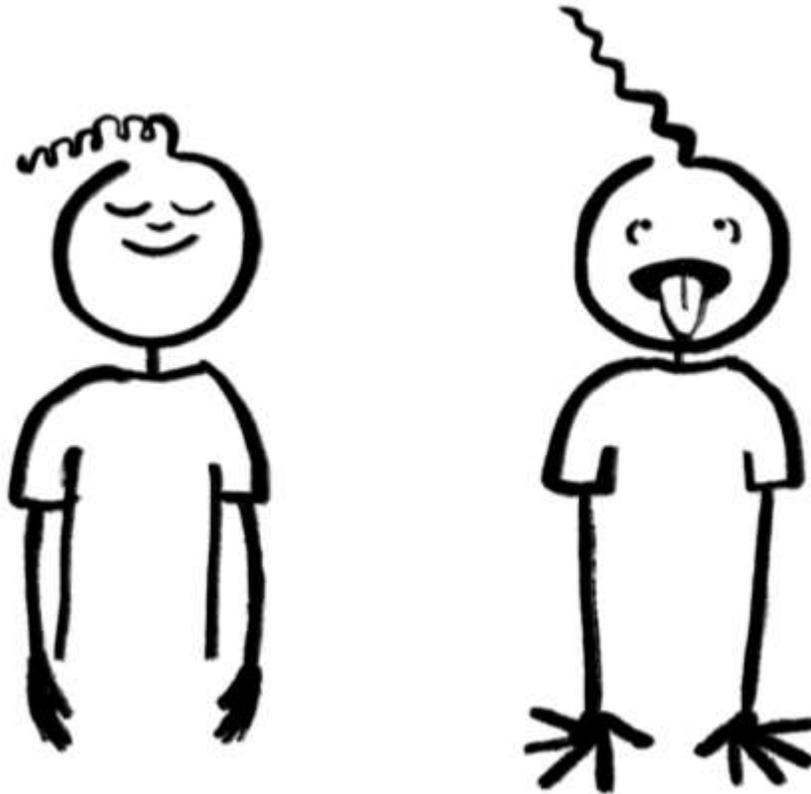
Caution: Be careful if you have pain in the neck or shoulders.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.



Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© **Happy Poses 2019**

Lion Pose



“I let go of anything unhelpful to me.”

Lion Pose

Exhale to release tension

Breathe in your nose to fill your lungs with air. Now with determination, exhale out an open mouth. (You may even stick out your tongue like a lion.) Let the fingers spread apart. Hear the sound of your breath as you empty all the air from your lungs. Repeat. With the exhale, say to yourself, “I let go of anything unhelpful to me.” Relax.

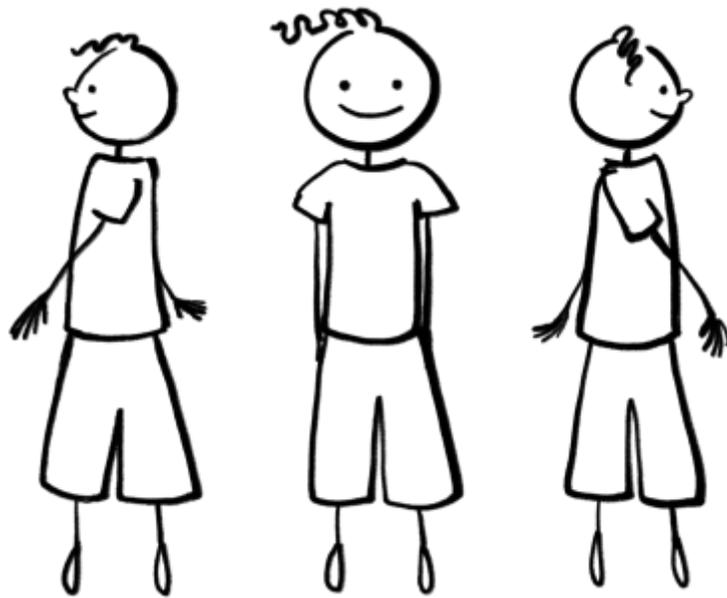
Caution: Be careful if you have issues with breathing or the heart.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Gentle Twist



“I am courageous.”

Gentle Twist

For flexibility of the upper body

Stand with feet comfortably under the body and arms along your sides. The legs are stable and feet stay in place. Inhale and turn the body to one direction. Exhale and turn to the other side. Back and forth, breath joins movement, as you gently twist from side to side. Neck and shoulders are soft. After a few rounds, start the swing from the other direction.

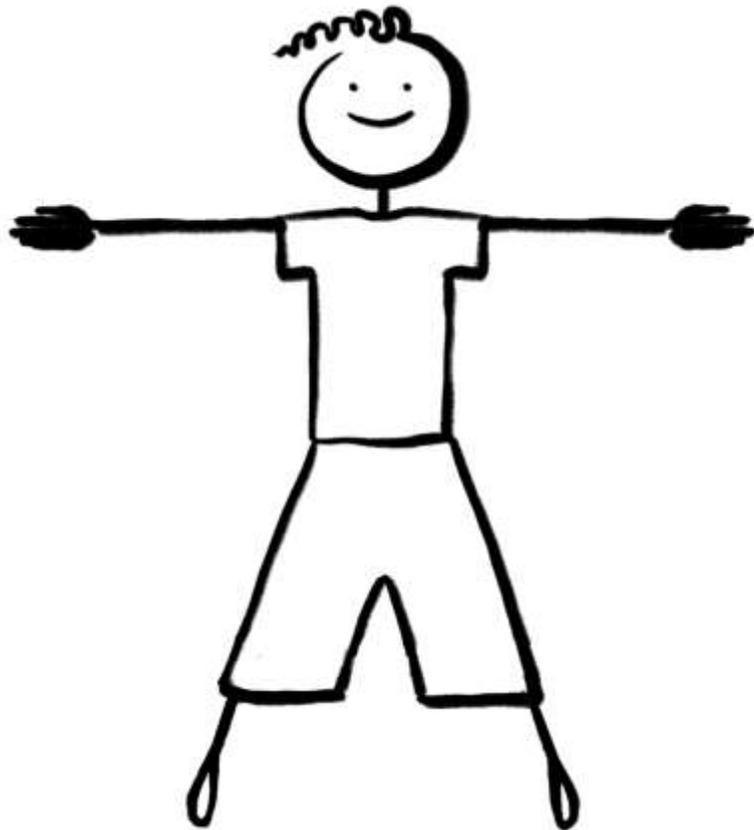
Caution: Avoid with pregnancy or stomach and back issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Star Pose



“I am a star.”

Star Pose

For arm and leg strength

Step your legs comfortably apart. The feet are straight with toes pointing front. Straight arms are raised to shoulders. Palms face front. Relax the shoulders away from the ears. Stand stable with a steady gaze. After a few breaths, step your legs together and bring the arms down. Can you stay in Star Pose a little longer each time?

Caution: Be careful with ankle, knee, hip or shoulder issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Side Stretch



“I am flexible.”

Side Stretch

Wake up and tone the sides of the body

Stand with parallel feet comfortably under the body. Bring your right arm straight overhead and gently bend from the waist to the left. To protect your back, do not lean forward or backwards. Stay for a few breaths, and then inhale as you come up to standing. Switch arms and repeat on the other side.

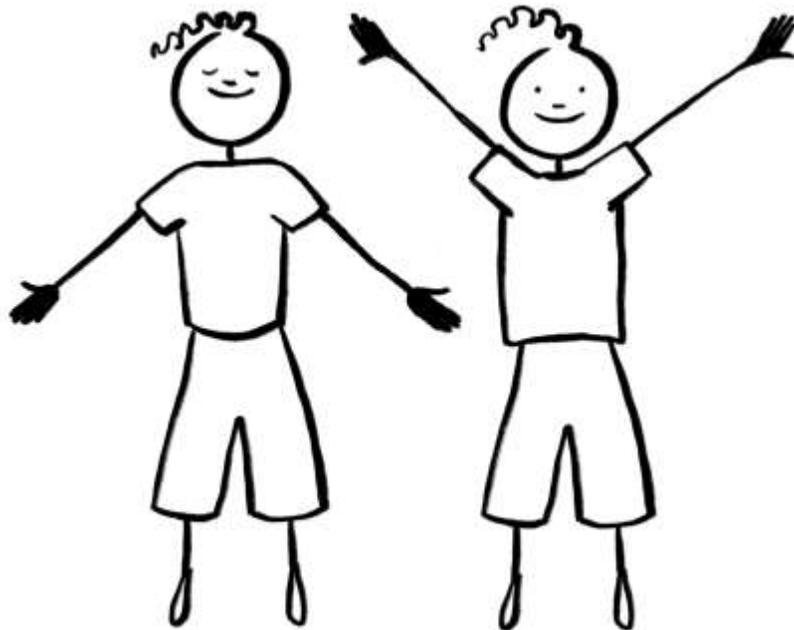
Caution: Avoid with pregnancy, hip or abdominal surgery, or heart issues. Use caution for neck, shoulder, hip and back issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Sunrise / Sunset



**“I am connected
to the circle of life.”**

Sunrise / Sunset

**Breath joins movements
for coordination and posture**

Stand with face forward and eyes steady. Rotate palms out so thumbs point away from the body. Check your posture. Stand evenly on your feet with a level waistline. Ears are over shoulders. Inhale and bring the arms up as far as comfortable. When hands come overhead, rotate the hands so thumbs face the front (relax your shoulders down). Exhale and bring the arms back down. Repeat (inhale arms up; exhale arms down). Relax.

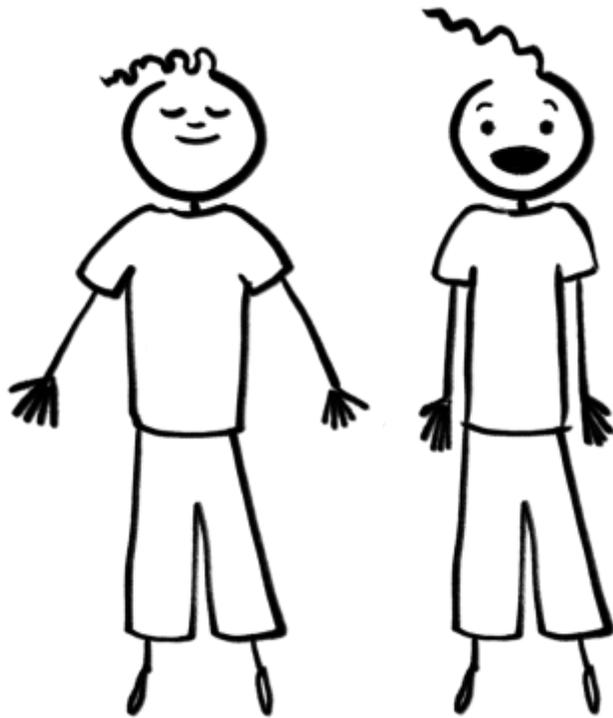
Caution: Be careful with shoulder, neck or breathing issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Energizing Breath



“I am filled with energy.”

Energizing Breath

A double-inhale to energize the body

Stand with arms along the sides and palms open. Slowly breathe out. Now quickly breathe in with two sharp breaths through the nose. Open your mouth and breathe out with two sharp breaths. Repeat a few rounds. Do you feel more energetic and focused?

Caution: Be careful with issues in the chest area or with breathing difficulties.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© **Happy Poses 2019**



Walk in Place



“I am capable.”

Walk in Place

For strength and stamina

Stay in one spot as you walk at your own pace. Keep a steady breath as you lift the knees and swing the elbows back and forth.

Do this exercise for 30 seconds, then stop and rest. Increase time as comfortable.

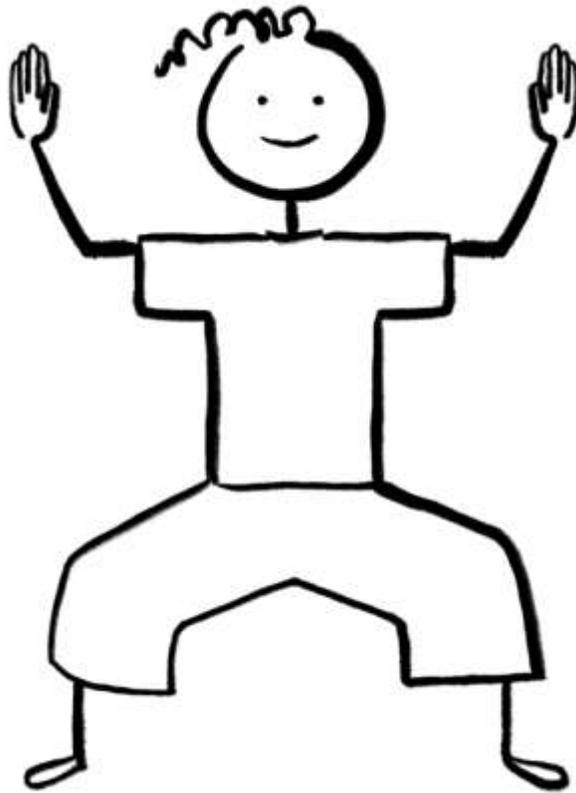
Caution: Be careful with heart, blood pressure, leg or hip issues. Avoid with pregnancy.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Strong Pose



“I am strong.”

Strong Pose

Vitalizes the whole body

Step your legs comfortably wide apart with feet pointing slightly out for stability. Bend knees over ankles. Straight arms are raised to shoulders. Bend the elbows to bring the hands upwards. Relax the shoulders down. Keep a steady gaze on one point. Do you feel strong on the inside? After a few breaths, bring the arms down and step your feet together. Can you stay in Strong Pose a little longer each time?

Caution: Be careful with ankle, knee, hip or shoulder issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Tree Pose



“I am rooted in the Earth.”

Tree Pose

Tones the legs and improves concentration

Stand with feet together. As able, balance on one leg as you bend the other knee and put that foot on the ankle or calf (not knee) of the standing leg. Lengthen the sides of your body and keep your waistline level. Arms can be out to the sides or overhead like branches. Stay for a few breaths, then bring the arms down and foot to the floor. Repeat on the other side.

Note: Use a wall for additional support as needed.

Caution: Avoid with pregnancy or back, hip or blood pressure issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Airplane Pose



“I fly through life with ease.”

Airplane Pose

Strengthens legs and improves focus

Stand and reach your arms wide to the sides like the wings of an airplane. Balance on one leg as you lift the other leg off the ground, toes pointed back. Keep the waist line level. Strengthen the back leg as you lengthen the arms through the fingertips. Focus on a point in front of you. After a few breaths, bring the arms down and foot to the floor. Repeat on the other side.

Caution: Avoid with pregnancy or back, hip or blood pressure issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Heart-full Pose



“My heart is full of love.”

Heart-full Pose

Gratitude brings a sense of well-being

Stand or sit comfortably with palms over your heart. Close your eyes and notice the sound of your breath and the beating of your heart. To yourself, note positive things about you. (For example, “I am a kind and generous person.”) Note people or things for which you are grateful. As you go about your day, remember these happy thoughts about yourself and others.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© **Happy Poses 2019**



Quiet Mind

Quiet Mind

Empty the thoughts to reduce stress



Stand or sit comfortably with a long back and wide shoulders. Close your eyes and bring your focus inside. Breathe in and out your nose, using a calm breath. Notice the sound of your breathing. Let your mind become quieter and quieter. As you exhale, let the breath float like a cloud through the top of your head. Watch the thoughts float away as you focus on your breath. Do you feel calmer and more focused?

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

“I am not my thoughts.”

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Bumblebee Breath



“I float on the current of life.”

Bumblebee Breath

Relax the body and calm the nerves

Close your eyes and mouth. Bring your attention inside your body. Inhale. As you breathe out, make a humming sound like that of a bumble bee. As you hum, imagine that you are a bumblebee, flying from flower to flower. When finished, relax and notice how you feel.

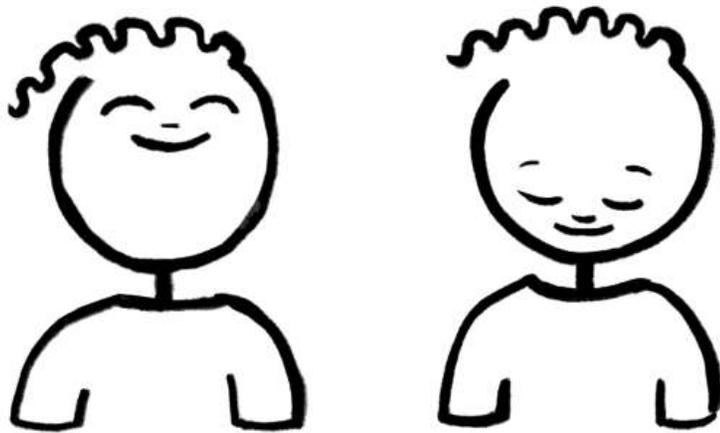
Caution: Go gently with breathing or chest issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Chin Up and Chin Down



**“I ask the universe for a song and it
sings to me!”**

Chin Up and Chin Down

**A gentle stretch to relax
the neck and throat muscles**

Stand or sit comfortably with face forward and eyes closed. Breathe in as you slowly bring the face up towards the sky. Breathe out as you slowly bring the face down, chin to chest. Repeat for a few rounds. Release and open the eyes.

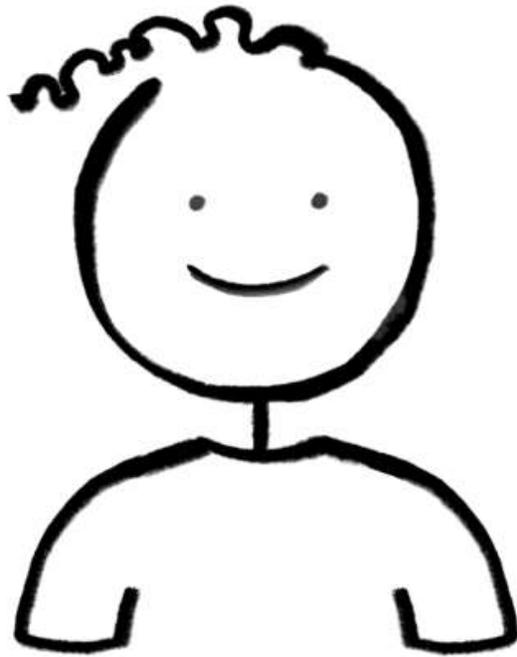
Caution: Be careful if you have pain in the neck or shoulders.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Smile Pose



“My inside-self is happy.”

Smile Pose

Being present in the moment

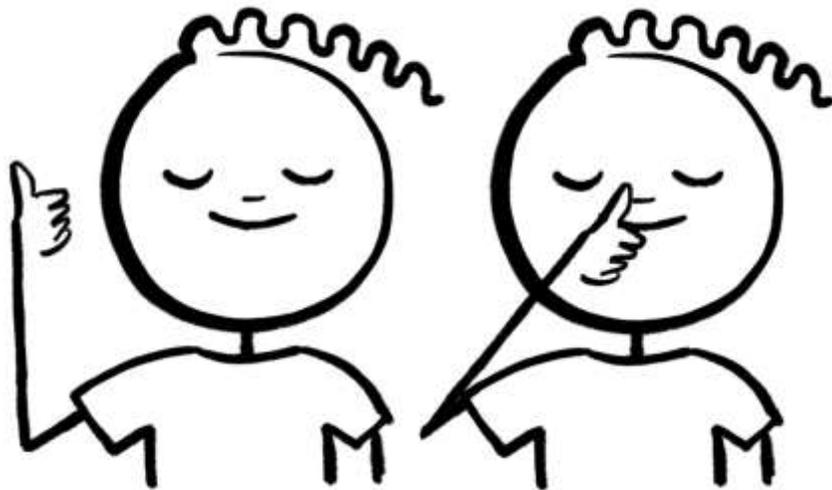
Stand or sit comfortably with a relaxed face and body. Bring your attention to breathing in and breathing out. Keep a calm breath. Be fully aware of what is happening around you at the moment. Imagine the center of your true self, where there is love and light. As you go about your day, let your gratitude shine from your heart.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Left Nostril Breathing



“I am relaxed and calm.”

Left Nostril Breathing

To calm

Sit or stand with a straight back and eyes closed. Exhale slowly. Use the thumb (or finger) of the right hand to close the right nostril. Slowly breathe in and out through the left nostril, keeping a smooth rhythm. Repeat for a few rounds. Do you feel more relaxed and peaceful?

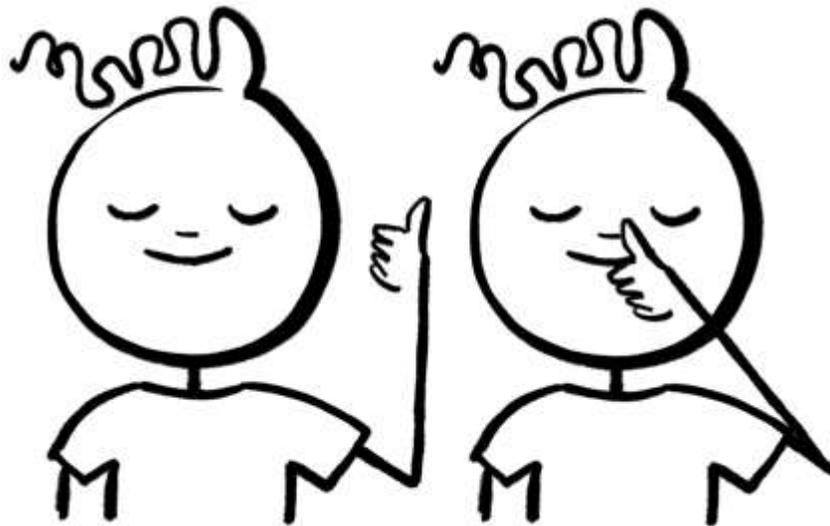
Caution: Avoid with congestion.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Right Nostril Breathing



“I am focused and energetic.”

Right Nostril Breathing

To energize

Sit or stand with a straight back and eyes closed. Exhale slowly. Use the thumb (or finger) of the left hand to close the left nostril. Slowly breathe in and out through the right nostril, keeping a smooth rhythm. Repeat for a few rounds. Do you feel more focused and refreshed?

Caution: Avoid with congestion.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Friendship Bridge (Partner Pose)



“You and I are one.”

Friendship Bridge

To build confidence and connection

Find a partner about the same height and size as you. Stand facing your partner. Step the feet slightly apart for stability.

Partners place their palms together with fingers pointing up. Keep the elbows bent and close to the body. Press evenly on your partner's palms to make a friendship bridge. Be aware of your breathing. Can you stay in a stable bridge? When finished, release your hands and thank your partner.

Caution: Avoid with pregnancy, any injuries, and back or shoulder issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Forest Circle

(Group Pose)



**“Together we reach
towards the sky.”**

Forest Circle

To build teamwork and trust

Stand stable in a circle with enough space for your arms. With bent elbows, place your palm (fingers pointing up) to the palm of the person next to you so the circle is connected. As in tree pose, balance on one leg as you bend the other knee and put that foot on the ankle or calf (not knee) of the standing leg. (You may keep both feet on the ground.) With your neighbor, reach the hands upwards. Hold for a few breaths, then release. Change legs.

Caution: Avoid with pregnancy, any injuries, back, shoulder or balance issues.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org
© Happy Poses 2019



Rest and Restore



“I am my true self.”

Rest and Restore

Relax the body and refresh the mind

Relax after exercising. You may lie down or sit in a comfortable way, using a mat, blanket, rug or grassy area.

Lie on your back so that your entire body is relaxed. The arms and legs are long; hands with palms facing up. Close your eyes and notice any comfort or discomfort in the body. Place your focus on breathing in and breathing out. Be still. Rest for 5-10 minutes. To come out of the pose, move slowly and push the body up with your hands to support the back.

Note: For additional back support, place a rolled blanket under the knees.

Caution: With back issues or injury, find a comfortable position that suits you. You may sit up to rest, or lean against a wall.

Check with a healthcare professional to make sure these exercises are appropriate for you.

Happy Poses Exercise Cards
happyposes.org © **Happy Poses 2019**

