

# PINWHEEL BREATH



## BENEFITS

Calms and focuses. Uses breath awareness to sustain attention as activities change and tasks increase in difficulty. Regulates breathing and oxygenates the body. Good before a test or when students are upset or anxious.

## TIME

3 to 20 minutes

## ACTIVITY

- Practice Belly Breathing with Hoberman Sphere (p. 63), inhaling and exhaling slowly.
- Now, with a pinwheel in your hand, purse lips as if whistling and blow out to spin the pinwheel.
- See how slowly you can spin the pinwheel but without gasping for your next breath.
- To help slow your inhalation, imagine that you have another pinwheel in the back of your throat. Breathe in through the nose and make this imaginary pinwheel spin as slowly as possible too. Inhale and spin the inner pinwheel, exhale and spin the outer pinwheel.
- Set down the pinwheel, close your eyes and mouth, and breathe through the nose entirely. Imagine slowly spinning your inner and outer pinwheels with your breath.

## VARIATIONS & INTEGRATION

- Keep the pinwheel continuously spinning for 10 seconds, then lengthen the time.
- Try Pinwheel Breath while in the Tree pose (p. 91).
- Spin the pinwheels to the beat of slow, steady music.
- Walk around the room to the beat of some slow music while spinning the pinwheels. Now, tap your leg with your hand to the beat of the music as you walk and spin the pinwheel at the same time!
- Find a partner and pat your free hands together (like patty-cake) to the beat of the music, while spinning the pinwheel. What did you experience doing this activity?
- Lead discussion on how to stay focused during challenging times, or read a story demonstrating what long-term, focused action can create such as Jean Giono's, *The Man Who Planted Trees*.
- Include pinwheels, windmills, water wheels, and so on in a Guided Relaxation (chapter 7).

## NOTES

The pursed-lip breathing technique is one of the simplest ways to control shortness of breath and is often taught to asthmatics. It provides a quick and easy way to slow the pace of breathing, making each breath more effective and increasing oxygen to the brain.

