

# Mindful Ways to Engage With Your Kids

- 1) Ask your child to explain how the Glitter Jar works.
- 2) Ask your child what the glitter in their jar represents. Maybe it's thoughts, feelings, stressors, physical sensations.
- 3) Watch the glitter jar with them and have a discussion.
  - The jar is like our mind, and each color of glitter represents something different in our mind.
  - Now we seal up the jar. (Put the lid on the jar and seal it.) Then we start our day.
  - We wake up, and things are pretty settled. We can see that clearly. (Show how all the glitter has settled on the bottom of the jar.)
  - But pretty soon, things start swirling around. Maybe we are running late (swirl the jar). Our sibling eats the last piece of toast for breakfast, and it leads to a fight (shake the jar). We hear scary things on the news in the car ride to school (swirl the jar). We get to school, and find out we aced a test (shake the jar).
  - Now it's only a few minutes into the school day, and we can't see clearly because all of our thoughts and feelings and urges are getting in the way.
  - So what is the one thing we can do to get the glitter to settle and see clearly again?
  - Be still! And what happens when we are still? We can see clearly again. There is also no way to rush being still. We can't push all the glitter down to the bottom. We just have to watch and wait. No amount of effort will make it settle sooner.
  - When things become clear, we'll know the wise next thing to do. In fact, that's one definition of wisdom: seeing things as they are and choosing how to act. Not being so reactive, but being responsive.
  - While we wait, does the glitter go away? No, it stays at the bottom. Our thoughts and feelings and urges are still in our minds, but they are no longer in our way, clouding our vision.

4) Engage in a breathing exercise together.



**Flower Breath:** Imagine smelling a beautiful flower, breathe in through the nose and out the mouth, releasing any tension. Stop and smell the roses, daffodils, daisies or any other flower they like. This is a simple way to connect kids to their breath and how it helps them to feel.



**Hissing Breath:** Breathe in the nose, long deep inhale, and out the mouth on a hissing sound, slow and long. Extending the exhale will allow kids to slow down their inner speed. It's wonderful to connect kids to their exhale to help them learn to slow themselves down, mentally and physically.



**Bear Breath:** Inhale through the nose, pause; exhale out the nose, pause. Breathe in to a count of 3 or 4, pause for a count of 1 or 2; breathe out for a count of 3 or 4, pause for a count of 1 or 2. Repeat a few times. This will help ground and settle kids. Wonderful for restful, reflective time. Imagine a bear hibernating. Helpful before nap time, story time or any creative activity.



**Bunny Breath:** Just 3 quick sniffs in the nose and one long exhale out the nose. Invite kids to pretend to be bunnies, sniffing the air for other bunnies, carrots to eat, or safety. It can be a lovely cleansing breath when you use it in this way. You can also use it when kids are very upset and can't find their breath, because it will help them connect to their exhale, so that they breathe instead of spin out.