Breathing Techniques to Calm

Summary: Visual guides for breathing techniques to help students self-regulate.

When to use:

- Use as part of a self-management system.
- Use to help focus.
- Use to help de-escalate.

How to use:

1. Keep the visual in a place where the student can access it as needed, such as in their binder, on their desk, belt loop, or on a lanyard.
2. When the student *starts* to get upset or off-task, remind them of their breathing techniques and direct them to use their visual.
3. To use the visuals, students trace their finger along the path, following the directions written on the visual.

Tips:

- *If you have a break or cool down area in your classroom, try posting the visuals there.*
- *Provide visuals to the home environment as well.*

How to teach:

1. Show the student a calming breathing visual at a time when they are not upset.
2. Model using the visual by tracing the path with your finger and following the instructions for inhaling and exhaling.
3. Ask the student to practice using the visual, helping them move their finger along the path as needed. Explain how deep, slow breaths can send a message to the brain that helps the body relax, calm their mind, and facilitate emotional regulation. Tell them that this is something they can do quietly at any time during the day.

Variations: Breathing Square, Lazy 8