

Therapeutic Music Experience
Breathe In, Breathe Out
Mary Jane Landaker, MME, MT-BC

Purpose: To encourage relaxation through breath control; one-step directives; upper extremity gross motor development; entrainment to external stimulus

Source: Original chant. © 2012 by Mary Jane Landaker, MME, MT-BC

Materials: None required; OPTIONAL: steady beat provided by recording, instrument, or body percussion. **NOTE – beat must be steady and nonintrusive as to not compete with voice of the therapist offering cues.

Environment: Quiet environment with limited distractions. Group members should be able to sit in comfortable position either on the floor or in a chair. Lights may be turned off if desired. Steady beat stimulus kept at low volume to encourage entrainment but attention to voice of the therapist.

Song/Chant/Words:

Breathe in, (X X X), breathe out (X X X).

Breathe in, (X X X), breathe out (X X X).

Breathe in, (X X X), breathe out (X X X).

A yawn is okay, too.

Hands up, (X X X), hands down (X X X).

Hands up, (X X X), hands down (X X X).

Hands up, (X X X), hands down (X X X).

A yawn is okay, too.

ADDITIONAL VERSES AS APPROPRIATE

Procedure: R = Reinforcement opportunities; C = Redirection/Cue opportunities; A = Assessment

1. Arrange the environment in appropriate manner for group members. May need to prompt group members to find a comfortable position or may need to arrange the physical environment to provide cues for relaxation
2. C= start steady beat stimulus
3. C= model deep breaths without speaking
4. C= start chant
5. A= observe group members to see if they are demonstrating entrainment to the beat and/or if they are completing requests as indicated by the lyrics

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6. R= reinforce all entrainment and/or request completion either within the context of the song or non-verbally
7. Repeat the chant until clients show s/s of desired behavior state, boredom, or until time runs out

Therapeutic Function of Music:

The steady beat and predictable lyrics offer group members with a structure to facilitate relaxation behaviors. The tempo may be adjusted to accommodate changes in client engagement, entrainment, and behavior states. The rhythmic pattern and instructions contained within the lyrics also contribute to inducing relaxation behaviors.

Melody	Pitch	Rhythm	Dynamics	Harmony
None	Variable verbal pitch	Steady beat	Quiet level	None

Form	Tempo	Timbre	Style	Lyrics
Strophic	Variable based on client responses	Verbal with beat provided through body percussion or instrument	Relaxation	Predictable and instructive

Chart adapted from Hanson-Abromeit, D. (2010). *A Closer Look at the Therapeutic Function of Music*. Presentation at 2010 American Music Therapy Association National Conference: Cleveland, OH.

Adaptations:

- Use same lyrics to continue breathing
- Change tempo to assess engagement with the external stimulus
- Model behaviors rather than chanting the lyrics

Extensions:

- Use same format for increasing attention behaviors rather than increasing relaxation behaviors – start with slow tempo that matches behavior indicators of group members and increase tempo slowly to speed up behavior indicators