

# Personal Bubbles & No Place Like Home Breath

(Also known as Pono Breath)



## PREPARE

- **Review Appendix A Notes and Background** to understand the purpose and how to deliver the lesson.
- **Hydrate** (See *Getting Started*)
- **Recommendation:** Do *Personal Bubble Freeze Dance* lesson (page \_\_\_\_ ) before this lesson: Ask participants what they remember from this lesson.
- **Prepare** space where participants can sit and face one another in pairs. If participants are really energetic, have them run in place as fast and as long as possible.
- Teachers: Please experience the breathing technique to better understand the effects.

## GO!

**Begin Personal Bubbles** (Space around the body versus inside as in *Body Bubbles* lesson)

1. Have participants face each other in pairs and have one person slowly lean toward his or her partner's face until the partner reacts by blinking, giggling, or breathing differently. Remind the person that he or she has entered the partner's *Personal Bubble*.

## OBJECTIVES

### **Personal Bubbles:**

- Develop self-awareness through sensations *from* body to mind
- Develop compassion, trust, and respect for self and others

### **No Place Like Home Breath:**

- Become aware of the feeling of *Home* inside the body and how it influences the mind
- Foster the ability to change perception through physical sensations
- Learn breathing strategies to center mind and body

2. Have the person's partner repeat the exercise, noticing the first person's reaction when he or she enters the partner's *Personal Bubble*.
3. Reflection: Ask the participants to notice the differences in each person's *Personal Bubble*.

***Begin No Place Like Home Breath*** (Space inside the body). *For young participants discuss: "This is a different "Home" than the one we live in. It is inside our bodies."*

1. Reflection: Ask the participants to notice how they are feeling (tired, anxious, calm).
2. Have participants sit comfortably (with crossed legs) or have them lie on their backs. If they are very energetic or excited, have them lie on their bellies with knees bent and feet in the air, resting their heads on the floor and gently rocking their legs right and left. (Being on belly is a good position for hyperactive young children.)
3. Inhale deeply and PAUSE while holding the deep breath.
4. Exhale gently and at length while softly humming the sound "Hommmmmme." (If lying on belly, gently rock legs left and right.) Repeat 2 to 4 times. (Young children should REST rather than PAUSE, to avoid hyperventilation.)
5. To deepen participant's awareness with the sensation of "Home," ask each person to notice where he or she feels the vibration while humming. Have them put their hands on their bodies where they feel the vibration end. Encourage them to notice the feeling in their whole body at the end of the exhalation. This feeling inside is referred to as "Home."
6. Repeat the process (3 times for younger children; up to 12 times for older children or adults). Repeat inhalation and exhalation with eyes open and then with eyes closed. Ask participants which way makes it easier to feel "Home."

## CLOSING

### ***Reflection:***

- Ask the participants: "How did you feel at the start of the lesson? How did you feel after doing the *Home Breath*? What is different in your mind or body?"
- Ask the participants if they feel different after doing *No Place Like Home Breath*. "How could you use *No Place Like Home Breath* to help you? How could you use these exercises at school or at home? When do we need to center ourselves?"
- Ask the participants: "Can you feel "Home" *inside* of your *Personal Bubble*?"
- Suggestion: "Imagine a stressful situation. Try doing the *Home Breath* and remember the feeling of "Home." Now let "Home" speak. Notice if perception and how we speak changes while addressing the stressful situation."

## NOTES

### When We Do The Lesson

*Condition:* Before test taking or reading aloud, before challenging discussions, after recess, before doing presentations or public speaking engagements, overloaded, at the dentist's office

*Behavior:* Anxiety, bumping into others, intruding, being oblivious to others

### Why We Do The Lesson

- Key to *Home Breath* is that this is not a relaxation exercise. The intention of this breathing lesson is to feel the bodily sensation associated with difference in attitude after doing *Home Breath*. The sensation of “*Home*” is then used to recall the sense of centeredness under stress or in the height of emotional turbulence. In Hawaii “*Home Breath*” would be called “*Pono Breath*,” *pono* means righteousness.

Both the long exhalations and the sound of “hommmmmme” or “haaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa” will often bring a nervous system into a calmed, centered state of being.

Ask participants to notice the change in attitude after the breathing technique and how perception also changes with the body sensations. Awareness of subtle sensations of the body and how they affect the mind is key to understanding how our bodies affect thinking. Associating the feeling nature of the body (or emotions) to thinking helps learning.

- Also important to recognize: People may need to move or exercise to release energy before trying to get centered.
- Recommended: Introduce *Home Breath* through games and activities before using for disciplinary measures. Learning “*Home*” while having fun or being playful will inspire people to want to recall “*Home*” during challenging times.
- Look at the steps in the lesson. Attention, step-by-step, is narrowed from “out there” to inside oneself. Maintaining attention span is a challenge for many people; so in this lesson, we take their unfocused attention and attach it to the sensation of the breath and sound of “*Home*” to narrow attention inside and refresh the mind.

- Teaching “*Home*” to control children will only get short-term results. The sense of “*Home*” is a way of reasoning, learning, and understanding oneself; it is a way of life.
- A centered mind improves comprehension, memory, communication, listening, and awareness of the perception causing stress.
- Getting a sense of the body’s “personal bubble” gives participants a sense of *where* to find “*Home*” inside. There are many lessons that teach breathing techniques but not a *sense* of orientation within the body associated with centeredness. The sensation of the body within its personal bubble is a guide to finding “*Home*.”
- Conflict: If there is conflict between people, they will often have no sense of awareness inside the body. Remind them to shift attention to the memory of that *sensation* of “*Home*” and let that “*Home*” communicate to the other (See *Ho’oponopono Home*). If they don’t remember how to shift their attention inside, please ask other participants for suggestions about how to remember and help each other.
- The concept of respect is easier to understand, especially for younger people, when they can *feel* the physical space between “personal bubbles.”
- To associate this concept of “personal bubbles” with listening skills, see *Listening Bubbles* lesson.
- Teachers and parents: Please do the lesson *with* your young people. Understanding the lesson is only possible through experience.

### BACKGROUND

- Disciplinary Measures: Spatial awareness within oneself needs training. With the sense of space *inside* the body, mental acuity improves. The clearer awareness is inside, the more one can be aware of someone else. Think about this when taking disciplinary measures with a child. If what is said is not comprehended, the child may have no sense of self and thus no sense of what is being explained. Perception comes from the physical sense of the body within the personal bubble.
- Visceral sensations help us focus attention on “who” is being attentive instead of what is being attended to. Sensations are often captured by external influences and draw us out of our bodies and clear thinking. Attention to the visceral sensations of “*Home*” helps inhibit the overload of external stimuli. This inhibition

of externals expands awareness of the individual, relieving reactions purely directed to others.

- The combination of these two lessons is key to enhancing the proprioceptive sense (body orientation and synergy of the senses giving perception), which is the foundation of all learning.
- **Breath:** The *No Place Like Home* section teaches that long exhalations slow the heart rate, calm emotions, and enhance mental acuity.
  - Notice the rhythm of the breath, and learn what is happening within the body and mind. The rhythm of breathing changes with different types of actions, feelings, thoughts, and movements.
  - One way to notice how children or adults are thinking and feeling is to watch the rhythm of their breathing. A tight ribcage or shallow, halted breathing can heighten emotional sensitivity. If we are confused when receiving directions, our breath may become shallow, or even halt temporarily. If we are feeling hesitant, we may want to notice if we are holding our breath.
  - Exhaling deeply sends messages to the vagus nerve and can help calm the heart rate. “The information from the aortic body (the aorta is the largest blood vessel in the heart and connects to the orifice of the left ventricle of the heart) travels along the vagus nerve (the tenth cranial nerve) to the respiratory center. The vagus nerve contains thousands of nerve fibers, many of which also carry information between the heart to the brain” (Childre & Martin, 1999, p. 31).
  - Breathing is one of the only functions that most people can perform voluntarily or involuntarily; therefore it crosses the bridge between the experience of the autonomic nervous system and the voluntary nervous system (or being able to consciously control breathing).
- Breathing is intimately connected to the heart rate, emotions, and mental acuity. When breathing is used to find the sense of centeredness, perceptions shift. (Whenever the word “sense” is used, think of the physical sensation of the body.) According to Celia Lavatelli’s book on *Piaget’s Theory of Development* (Lavatelli, 1973): “Only when a child must, in some way, change what he perceives around him is logical thinking involved.”
- A *Personal Bubble* is really an energetic or magnetic field that surrounds the body. This field is able to be measured by scientists with biofeedback machines; it emanates from the heart. Experiencing the sensation of the boundary in this field can help an individual find his/her center. The interplay between feeling the

differences from the “outer world” and from one’s center is what the nervous system does naturally to learn.

Brain and heart researchers at the Institute of HeartMath reported: “The heart’s electromagnetic field is by far the most powerful produced by the body; it’s approximately 5000 times greater in strength than the fields produced by the brain. It can be measured up to 8-10 feet away with sensitive detectors called magnetometers” (Childre and Martin, 1999, p. 33).