

# Breathe, Stretch and Relax

## Station 1: Breathe

Shake your body and your arms. Pat your body up and down while you continue to increase blood flow. You are warming your body.

**Step 1:** Stand or sit with your arms at your sides. Close your eyes and bring your attention to your breath. If your mind wanders, it is OK. Simply bring your mind back to your breath.

**Step 2:** Slowly raise your arms over your head while you breathe in slowly. Imagine you're filling a balloon with air. Lower your arms to your sides as you breathe out. Imagine the balloon is deflating. Exhale completely.

**Step 3:** Release your tension with each breath. Repeat three times.

## Station 2: Stretch

When you feel stressed, you often carry tension in your shoulders and neck. Sometimes you don't recognize stress until you feel physical pain. Relieve tension in your muscles by stretching throughout the day.

**Step 1:** Stand or sit with your arms at your sides. Bring your shoulders up toward your ears. Hold for four seconds and release. Repeat three times.

**Step 2:** Let your chin fall to your chest. Slowly roll your head down and around making a complete circle. Repeat in the opposite direction moving slowly. Repeat in each direction.

**Step 3:** Reach your right arm upward as if you were trying to touch the ceiling. Reach for eight to 10 seconds. Reach with your left arm. Alternate reaching with your right and left arm three times.

**Step 4:** Bend over and let your upper body hang toward your toes. Feel your body getting longer. Your legs can be straight or slightly bent. Relax and hang for eight to 10 seconds. Very slowly (one vertebrae at a time) raise your body back to your starting position.

## Station 3: Relax

**Step 1:** Find a quiet, uninterrupted spot. If necessary, put on your headphones to block out all sounds. Turn on quiet, soothing music. Sit or lay down. Shift your weight until you are comfortable. Close your eyes. Clear your mind of all your worries and cares.

Imagine you have travelled alone to the most beautiful place in the world. Paint a picture in your mind. Make it your own. Your breathing is getting shallow.

**Step 2:** Starting with your head, slowly relax each part of your body. Relax your head. Relax your shoulders. Relax your arms. Relax your chest, stomach and back. Take your time. Feel your body melting.

Relax your hips. Relax your thighs. Relax your knees. Relax your calves. Your last bit of energy travels out your body as you relax your feet.

You have arrived at peace. Enjoy these peaceful moments.

Only when you are ready, return your mind to the room, open your eyes and slowly get up.