

## Set-up

Plan to do this activity outside or in a room that looks out over a pleasant view. Fresh air will be an asset, so if the Breathe... session is inside, open windows and doors to let in the freshness of morning.

## Notes for Instructor and Staff

Anyone can lead these exercises, however, if you can find a person skilled in spiritual meditation, yoga, or Tai Chai, their expertise will provide additional depth to each camper's experience.

- Direct the activity with a calm, positive, and reassuring voice.
- Model all actions and movements. Feel free to walk among the campers to help pose, reassure, and remind them of the purpose and process.
- All staff present should participate, setting an example for campers.

## Gathering

As campers gather, have restful music playing. A CD of sounds from nature would be appropriate. If the activity is outside, the music of nature may be adequate. It is important for counselors to be clued into this activity before the first morning, so that they can help campers come prepared and ready to participate. The following instructions should be relayed before they even head for the activity.

- Gather from a specific point (*the big oak tree, the hallway into the room*) in silent respect for one another.
- When you arrive, sit at least an arm's length from anyone else.
- Sit cross-legged on the ground or floor. Place hands on your legs just above the knees, palms facing upward.
- Remain silent, listening to the music/sounds of nature.
- Follow directions of the leader. If asked to talk, remember the importance of returning quickly to your silence for personal connection and reflection.
- There is no right or wrong way of doing these exercises. To laugh at or criticize another person is completely inappropriate.
- Relax and enjoy this quiet time with God.

## Part 1: Breathe . . . Narration

This section contains the leader's narrative to guide campers on their daily journey of breathing exercises and stretches.

## Part 2: Worship & Praise

The second part of this activity takes campers into a time for scripture, prayer, singing, and praise.

# Breathe . . . Just Breathe

MORNING DEVOTIONS

Schedule a "Breathe..." session in the early part of each day. Its purpose is to awaken the soul to God within. This activity replaces the "morning devotions" referenced in previous Camp Helps.

## Instructor

## Time

## Location

## Special Notes



## Camp Helpers: "It's a God Thing" DAY 1: CREATOR OF AWES

### ■ Breathe . . . Narration

Sit cross-legged (or in a chair if preferred.) Place your hands on your legs just above the knees, palms facing up toward the sky as if to open and receive the Spirit. Close your eyes and rest.

Take a deep breath (pause), then let it out. Now slowly breathe. Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in—feel the fresh air as it fills your lungs with the newness of morning. Breathe out. Repeat.

Remember, much of the "Breathe... Just Breathe" activity repeats itself each morning. Note that sections printed in blue are thoughts and instructions unique for the day's theme.

Continue to breathe deeply as I tell you about Ruah. Old Testament authors used the Hebrew word Ruah to express the wind, the Spirit, the "breath of God." Ruah is truly "a God thing." Ruah is the breath of God present within all things living. A gift of the Creator to the created, Ruah brings creative life from chaos, it liberates, it inspires.

Now, breathe. Taking slow deep breaths, feel Ruah. Feel the wind on your face. Feel the breath of God filling your soul.

With your next breath, raise your arms into the air, stretching as high as you can while remaining seated. Hold it. As you let out your breath, bring your arms back down. Repeat three times.

Place your arms and feet straight out in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—

don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch.

As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning, the breath of God. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

Stand. Place your feet shoulder width apart. With your right hand on your right hip, stretch your left hand down your left side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

With your left hand on your left hip, stretch your right hand down your right side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Lean forward, stretching hands slowly toward the floor.

Stand tall and reach toward the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Place hands on hips, slowly lean back. Stretch. Stand back up. Repeat. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Sit back down. Place your arms and feet straight in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch. As you stretch,

### 2—Breathe . . . Just Breathe

continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

### ■ Sing, dance, and shout for joy!

While standing, transition into singing songs of worship and praise.

### ■ Hear the Word

Ask campers to read Psalm 104:24–25, 27–30 NRSV.

O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great.

These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.

When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground.

### ■ Pray

Provide opportunity for campers to pray for the camp, their families and friends at home, the leaders of their countries, and their learning and understanding of God.

## Camp Helpers: "It's a God Thing"

### ■ Sending Forth

As you go through today, think about the awe inspiring ginkgo tree. Picture its unique fan-shaped leaves rustling in the wind...softly, silently reminding us of the breath of God that touches each of us. Take a deep breath. Now let it out. Today is a new day so as you go about your activities remember to Breathe...Just Breathe!

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## DAY 2: THE GOD IN YOU AND ME

### ■ Breathe . . . Narration

Sit cross-legged (or in a chair if preferred.) Place your hands on your legs just above the knees, palms facing up toward the sky as if to open and receive the Spirit. Close your eyes and rest.

Take a deep breath (pause), then let it out. Now slowly breathe. Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in—feel the fresh air as it fills your lungs with the newness of morning. Breathe out. Repeat.

Bring your hands slowly together with your palms facing each other. As your hands slowly come together (about 2 inches or so apart) can you feel the energy field? Hold your hands still at the point you feel that energy.

Turn and do the same thing with a partner. As your hands slowly meet (again at about 2 inches apart) do you feel the energy? Hold that moment in time. Allow the energy to flow between you. Connect. Breathe deeply in and out, focusing on the energy that is shared

between you. Recognize the breath of God as you connect with your partner. Pattern your breathing together. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in, breathe out.

Now, breathe. Taking slow deep breaths, feel Ruah. Feel the wind on your face. Feel the breath of God filling your soul.

With your next breath, raise your arms into the air, stretching as high as you can while remaining seated. Hold it. As you let out your breath, bring your arms back down. Repeat three times.

Place your arms and feet straight out in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch.

As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning, the breath of God. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

Stand. Place your feet shoulder width apart. With your right hand on your right hip, stretch your left hand down your left side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

With your left hand on your left hip, stretch your right hand down your right side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath.

## 3—Breathe . . . Just Breathe

Breathe in, breathe out.

Lean forward, stretching hands slowly toward the floor.

Stand tall and reach toward the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Place hands on hips, slowly lean back. Stretch. Stand back up. Repeat. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Sit back down. Place your arms and feet straight in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes don't worry, just stretch. As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

### ■ Sing, dance, and shout for joy!

While standing, transition into singing songs of worship and praise.

### ■ Hear the Word

Ask campers to read Psalm 139:1–10, 14 NRSV

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.

You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my

## Camp Helpers: "It's a God Thing"

tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.  
You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful  
for me; it is so high that I  
cannot attain it.  
Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your  
presence?  
If I ascend to heaven, you are  
there; if I make my bed in  
Sheol, you are there.  
If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits  
of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold  
me fast.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully and  
wonderfully made.

### ■ Pray

Provide opportunity for campers to pray for the camp, their families and friends at home, the leaders of their countries, and their learning and understanding of God.

### ■ Sending Forth

Look at the camp ginkgo tree. Think about the people who are represented by the names written on the leaves. "Namaste." The divine in me meets the divine in you. What is special about the people whose names you placed on the tree? What makes you special? As your paths cross today, make a point to greet one another with the word, "Namaste."

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## DAY 3: IN SEARCH OF WISDOM

### ■ Breathe . . . Narration

Sit cross-legged (or in a chair if preferred.) Place your hands on your legs just above the knees, palms facing up toward the sky as if to open and receive the Spirit. Close your eyes and rest.

Take a deep breath (pause), then let it out. Now slowly breathe. Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in—feel the fresh air as it fills your lungs with the newness of morning. Breathe out. Repeat.

Read Isaiah 11:2 NRSV

The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

Breathe in, breathe out. As you take in your breath, recognize it as Ruah, the breath of God. Accept the freshness and renewal of God's breath in you.

Breathe in, breathe out. With each breath accept with it the wisdom and insight that comes from Yahweh to us. Let the spirit of the LORD rest on you. Allow yourself to be enveloped in that knowledge of God's presence. Breathe in, breathe out.

Now, breathe. Taking slow deep breaths, feel Ruah. Feel the wind on your face. Feel the breath of God filling your soul.

With your next breath, raise your arms into the air, stretching as

## 4—Breathe . . . Just Breathe

high as you can while remaining seated. Hold it. As you let out your breath, bring your arms back down. Repeat three times.

Place your arms and feet straight out in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch.

As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning, the breath of God. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

Stand. Place your feet shoulder width apart. With your right hand on your right hip, stretch your left hand down your left side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

With your left hand on your left hip, stretch your right hand down your right side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Lean forward, stretching hands slowly toward the floor.

Stand tall and reach toward the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Place hands on hips, slowly lean back. Stretch. Stand back up.

## Camp Helpers: "It's a God Thing"

Repeat. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Sit back down. Place your arms and feet straight in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch. As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning. Sit back up. Reach for the sky.

Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

### ■ Sing, dance, and shout for joy!

While standing, transition into singing songs of worship and praise.

### ■ Hear the Word

Ask campers to read Proverbs 2:1–11 NRSV.

My child, if you accept my words and treasure up my commandments within you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and incline your heart to understanding;  
if you indeed cry out for insight, and raise your voice for understanding;  
if you seek it like silver, and search for it as for hidden treasures—  
then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.  
For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding;  
he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk blamelessly,

guarding the paths of justice and preserving the way of his faithful ones.

Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path;  
for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;  
prudence will watch over you; and understanding will guard you.

### ■ Pray

Provide opportunity for campers to pray for the camp, their families and friends at home, the leaders of their countries, and their learning and understanding of God.

### ■ Sending Forth

An individual ginkgo tree could live as long as 3,000 years. Imagine for just a moment what it would be like to live that long. Think about all the things you would see, people you would meet, and wisdom you would gain. As you go about the activities of this day, be aware of the things you are learning and wisdom you are gaining along the way.

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## DAY 4: GROUNDED IN LOVE

### ■ Breathe . . . Narration

Sit cross-legged (or in a chair if preferred.) Place your hands on your legs just above the knees, palms facing up toward the sky as if to open and receive the Spirit. Close your eyes and rest.

## 5—Breathe . . . Just Breathe

Take a deep breath (pause), then let it out. Now slowly breathe. Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in—feel the fresh air as it fills your lungs with the newness of morning. Breathe out. Repeat.

Relax for a moment as I show you a short clip from the movie *Star Trek Insurrection*.\*

### Movie Clip *Star Trek Insurrection*

Scene 14: A Perfect Moment

Start at the beginning of scene. Pause as the hummingbird stretches out to feed on the flower.

In this clip Anij shared with Picard slowing down and experiencing a single moment in time. In that moment, all senses of awareness were heightened.

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Get back into your sitting position. Sit cross-legged. Place your hands on your legs just above the knees, palms facing up toward the sky as if to open and receive the Spirit. Now breathe. Breathe in deeply, breathe out completely. Repeat. Focus only on your breathing.

Breathe in deeply—now hold it! Be still, completely still. Let the love shared through the breath of God fill your being. Embrace the moment. Breathe out. Breathe in and hold it. Experience God's love. Breathe out. Breathe in deeply. Accept the gift of God's love. Live in this moment. Just you and God.

Now, breathe. Taking slow deep breaths, feel Ruah. Feel the wind on your face. Feel the breath of God filling your soul.

## Camp Helpers: "It's a God Thing"

With your next breath, raise your arms into the air, stretching as high as you can while remaining seated. Hold it. As you let out your breath, bring your arms back down. Repeat three times.

Place your arms and feet straight out in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch.

As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning, the breath of God. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

Stand. Place your feet shoulder width apart. With your right hand on your right hip, stretch your left hand down your left side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

With your left hand on your left hip, stretch your right hand down your right side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Lean forward, stretching hands slowly toward the floor.

Stand tall and reach toward the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Place hands on hips, slowly lean back. Stretch. Stand back up. Repeat. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Sit back down. Place your arms and feet straight in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch. As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

## ■ Sing, dance, and shout for joy!

While standing, transition into singing songs of worship and praise.

## ■ Hear the Word

Ask campers to read Ephesians 3:14–19 NRSV.

I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

## 6—Breathe . . . Just Breathe

### ■ Pray

Provide opportunity for campers to pray.

### ■ Sending Forth

Today I challenge you to slow time down. Embrace each moment as a gift of God's love for you. Make time to share that love with others.

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## DAY 5: BACK ON THE BIKE

### ■ Breathe . . . Narration

Sit cross-legged (or in a chair if preferred.) Place your hands on your legs just above the knees, palms facing up toward the sky as if to open and receive the Spirit. Close your eyes and rest.

Take a deep breath (pause), then let it out. Now slowly breathe. Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in—feel the fresh air as it fills your lungs with the newness of morning. Breathe out. Repeat.

Now, breathe. Taking slow deep breaths, feel Ruah. Feel the wind on your face. Feel the breath of God filling your soul.

With your next breath, raise your arms into the air, stretching as high as you can while remaining seated. Hold it. As you let out your breath, bring your arms back down. Repeat three times.

Place your arms and feet straight out in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch.

## **Camp Helpers: "It's a God Thing"**

As you stretch, continue to breathe. Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning, the breath of God. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

Stand. Place your feet shoulder width apart. With your right hand on your right hip, stretch your left hand down your left side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

With your left hand on your left hip, stretch your right hand down your right side, reaching toward the knee. Come back up slowly.

Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Lean forward, stretching hands slowly toward the floor.

Stand tall and reach toward the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Place hands on hips, slowly lean back. Stretch. Stand back up. Repeat. Breathe in, breathe out. Breathe in the renewal of God's breath. Breathe in, breathe out.

Sit back down. Place your arms and feet straight in front of you. Stretch your hands toward your toes. Slowly—don't bounce—stretch. If you can't touch your toes, don't worry, just stretch. As you stretch, continue to breathe.

Let your lungs continue to fill with the freshness of the morning. Sit back up. Reach for the sky. Breathe in, breathe out. Reach arms up, bring arms down.

## **■ Sing, dance, and shout for joy!**

While standing, transition into the singing songs of worship and praise.

## **■ Hear the Word**

Ask campers to read Colossians 3:12–11 NRSV.

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other, just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

## **■ Pray**

Provide opportunity for campers to pray.

## **7—Breathe . . . Just Breathe**

### **■ Sending Forth**

At the end of World War II on August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima by the Americans. A month later, when the plants and trees in the area around the epicentre were examined, a ginkgo tree situated about 1.1 km away from the blast center was found to be budding! There are four ginkgo trees still alive today that endured the atomic bomb. Because of the strength and resilience of this tree, it has become regarded as the "bearer of hope." The ginkgo tree stood as a miracle for all to see. Your challenge today is to be a bearer of hope, to be the miracle. Share a smile, good thoughts, and a positive attitude.