Episode: “Rock Marathon”

When Albie gets tired during her rock-n-roll marathon, she doesn’t want to take a break from rocking out. After she meets a real band and learns that even rock stars take breaks, Albie decides that a short rest can be a helpful way to re-energize.

Activity

Materials:
• Just you!

Steps:
Watch “Rock Marathon,” and notice how the members of West Philadelphia Orchestra take breaks when they get tired by stretching, napping or having a snack. Another trick they use is taking a big, deep breath. We breathe without thinking about it all the time, but focusing on our breaths is a great way to calm down when we need a break. As a family, give these breathing exercises a try:

Animal Breathing:
1. Inhale through your nose and exhale like all different animals. Start by taking a big deep breath in....
2. ...then exhale by hissing like a snake! Hold the sssss as long as you can.
3. Breathe in again, then buzz like a bee. Hold that zzzzz sound.
4. Take another deep breath and roar like a fierce lion.
5. Breathe deep and moo like a cow, holding the moo until all the air is out.
6. Now breathe in, but this time like a bunny, with lots of tiny sniffs.
7. Exhale like a puppy, with lots of little pants.
8. Take one final breath in, hold it in your mouth like a blowfish, then look up and blow it up to the sky like a whale.
9. Come up with some more animals to breathe like!

Birthday Breathing:
1. Imagine you’re at a birthday party and there’s a big slice of pizza in front of you.
2. Smell the delicious pizza, taking a big breath through your nose.
3. Whoops, the pizza is hot! Blow on the pizza as you exhale to cool it down.
4. Time for cake! Turn that imaginary pizza into a birthday cake full of candles.
5. Smell the yummy cake by breathing through your nose.
6. Now blow out the candles through your mouth. Make sure to get all the air out to get every last candle!

**Square Breathing:**
1. Draw an imaginary square with your pointer finger in the air.
2. Slowly count to four as you draw each side of the square.
3. Now match your breath to your counting. Breathe in for four counts as you draw one side of your box, out for four as you draw the next side and so-on.
4. Repeat a few times as your body calms down.
5. Try drawing different shapes in the air like a diamond, rectangle or circle (breathe in as you draw half of the circle and out as you draw the other half).

**Color Breathing:**
1. Put your hands on your belly and close your eyes.
2. Breathe in through your nose, imagining you can fill your belly up with a color. Feel your belly puff up full of that color.
3. Breathe out, imagining that color changing to another color as it leaves your belly.
4. Now make your colors into a rainbow. Extend your arms to the side, and reach up as you inhale. Bring your arms down as you exhale, imagining you are painting a rainbow.

**Tips**
- Try to practice these exercises with your child when they are calm rather than in times of stress. This might make them more inclined to use them when they need a true calm-down.
- Visual tools may be helpful for your child to guide these exercises. Trace the colors on a picture of a rainbow as you do your color breathing. Draw a square and trace the lines with your finger for square breathing.

**In this activity, your child:**
- Learned different breathing games to calm their bodies down
- Used their imaginations and paid attention to their bodies
Talk to your child! Conversation Starters:

• What does Albie learn when she talks to the members of West Philadelphia Orchestra? What tricks have you tried when you need a break?
• Let's think of some times when our breathing games might be helpful to us. Are there times of our day that are frustrating or stressful that we can remind each other to use our deep breaths? What about before nap or bedtime to help our bodies calm down?

Keep Going!

Breathing Tools
Incorporate objects that you blow into your breathing games. Bubbles, pinwheels, dandelions and feathers are all great tools for learning how to focus on your breath.

Five Things for Five Senses
Our senses are always available to us when we need a break. Ask your child to name five things for each of their five senses. What five things can you see, smell, hear, feel and even taste right now? Be creative for that last one (they might taste the front of their teeth or the roof of their mouth). The goal is to focus on the here and now.

Vocabulary

Inhale: Breathing in
Exhale: Breathing out
More At-Home Activities
Visit PBS LearningMedia for more activities like this inspired by Albie’s Elevator.

Children’s Books with Related Themes
Check out these children’s books online or at your local library to continue exploring the concepts in this episode.

*My Body is a Rainbow: The Color of My Feelings* by Mallikra Chopra
This child-friendly meditation through color helps kids sit with their big feelings and notice where they are in their bodies.

*Breathe Like A Bear* by Kira Willey
Breathe along with the little bear as the cub settles into hibernation.