

## SHALOM MY BODY

These are a few exercises for your physical body that will help you relax and be able to connect with people and with God. It is very important to learn how to calm your body and there are different exercises that can be done. These three here are recommended by Dr. Jim Wilder and based on brain science and how our body works together with our brain.

They will open up your brain's relational circuits.

1. Breathe and scrunch up your face 4 times, arching your head back. Use either a fear response or an anger response.

Fear—eyes pop out, forehead wrinkles

Anger—make nose big

It's like wiggling a bolt back and forth until it gets loosened up. Doing a fear or anger response physiologically and then relaxing it loosens up the response your brain makes and helps you to calm your emotions.

Fear response in babies is to throw head back. So each time you scrunch up your face, as you do it throw your head back. Then as you bring your head forward relax your face and repeat "Whenever I am afraid I will trust in you O Lord." (from Psalm 56:3)

2. Yawning triggers our parasympathetic response which is part of calming. (Your **parasympathetic** nervous system is a network of nerves that relaxes your body after periods of stress or danger. It also helps run life-sustaining processes, like digestion, during times when you feel safe and relaxed.)

Yawn to left and then to right—4 times. After each repetition say, "Whenever I am afraid I will trust in you, O Lord"

3. "Knocking" to wake up your brain's attachment center – 4 times

—encourage heart and breathing to work together. Calms your nervous system from being in a state of stress.

The attachment center comes to the surface of the body in two places: the middle of the ear and on your chest. Wake up vagus nerve on the chest. Knock, with your hands on either side of your heart, slowly back and forth on it about the speed of your heart. The reason to do this is because when you breathe into your lungs your heart speeds up and when you breathe out your heart slows. People with PTSD don't have those two things working together. It's an indication that your nervous system is basically disorganized so this is encouraging your heart and breathing to work together.

When you breathe in (taking a deep breath) tap faster, and then when you release your breath, just slowly rub the same spots and repeat "Whenever I am afraid I will trust in you, O Lord." Repeat several times. This is a way we can begin to train our body to come down into a less fearful, less adrenaline based, less angry state. And that will help us to get our relational circuits on so that we can interact with God and people.

These are just a few basic steps to help us notice what is going on in our body, calming our body down and then make some kind of connection with God.

Information based on video by Dr. Jim Wilder  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oRy3KeAUIFw>