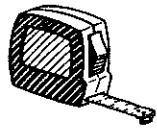


## Tool Descriptions & Hand Gestures



### Breathing Tool

*I calm myself and check-in.*

**Concept:** Awareness of breathing brings immediate calm and time to think. It is a bridge to self-reflection that guides us toward effective choices and positive change. Cultures across the world have recognized the breath as a gateway to wisdom. Without the healthy ability to practice inner-calm and self-reflection, it is difficult to learn, relate with others, or know oneself. Attention to breathing is key to self-control, understanding, and genuine connection with others.

**Hand Gesture:** Touch thumbs and index fingers together in front of you as if holding a tape measure; slowly pull hands apart while taking a breath. On exhale, bring hands slowly back together. Repeat three times.

### Quiet/Safe Place Tool

*I remember my quiet, safe place.*



**Concept:** Quietness gives one strength. When we have a “place” of solace, safety, and quiet, then creativity, imagination, and self-expression emerge naturally. One way we feel safe is when we have a quiet, safe place *physically*. The Quiet/Safe Place Tool is a way of remembering our quiet stillness. When we listen from the quiet place within our hearts, we make space to hear our natural wisdom.

**Hand Gesture:** Place hands over ears while bending head slightly forward. Close eyes and “go to” your quiet/safe place...any time.



### Listening Tool

*I listen with my ears, eyes, and heart.*

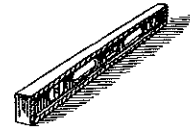
**Concept:** Listening with one’s heart is the key to strong relationship and conflict resolution, leading us to empathy. When we breathe from a quiet place inside, the ability to listen to what we are saying to ourselves and each other becomes easier.

**Hand Gesture:** Emulate a carpenter tapping on a wall and listening for the location of a stud behind the wall. With two fingers, gently tap near your ear reminding yourself to “listen into” what is being said.

The 12 Tools • Tool Descriptions, cont.

## Empathy Tool

*I care for others. I care for myself.*



**Concept:** Empathy is noticing how another person is feeling and being able to understand what they might be feeling. Empathy is caring about someone else. Empathy is the root of tolerance, kindness, and forgiveness. Turned inward, this becomes care and understanding for oneself.

**Hand Gesture:** Place hands in front of you, palms up, as if holding an imaginary level. Slowly raise the left hand, as you slowly lower the right hand. Reverse the motions repeatedly (like a “see-saw.”).



## Personal Space Tool

*I have a right to my space and so do you.*

**Concept:** We all have an indelible right to our personal space and the responsibility to give others the same right. Noticing the physical space around us helps us see our own needs and how we may be impacting others. In addition, this Tool encompasses intelligence through awareness of our body wisdom: body language, sensations, gestures, position, posture, voice tone, quality, and volume.

**Hand Gesture:** Outstretch hands in front of you, palms forward, with elbows relaxed. Slowly move hands apart and together again, delineating a curved boundary around you.

## Using Our Words Tool

*I use the “right” words in the “right” way.*



**Concept:** Careful use of words encourages understanding, connection, and intimacy. Careless or offensive words harm relationships. By learning the importance of words and how they impact relationships, the Using Our Words Tool gives us a voice to ask for what we want and need. This is a skill we must learn. Using the “right” words, at the “right” time, in the “right” way, for the “right” reasons creates the possibility for deeper connections to self and others. Using Our Words well helps us with clarifying misunderstandings and conflict resolution.

**Hand Gesture:** Hold an imaginary pencil and “write” your initials in the air.



## Garbage Can Tool

*I let the little things go.*

**Concept:** We do not have to take unkind words personally (into our personal space). We can take responsibility for what we do with other people's words and actions and how we feel about them. Sometimes the best choice is to throw harmful words away. Sometimes we need to listen more carefully to what is behind the words. This Tool has its origins in the martial art of Aikido, The Art of Peaceful Reconciliation. It is one of the children's favorites.

**Hand Gesture:** Place one hand on your hip creating an open semicircle. With the other hand, make a "throwing-away" gesture into the open space under the arm. Or, make a "thumbs-up" sign with one hand, then flip thumb down (as if closing the lid on the garbage can).

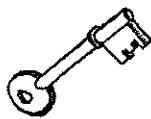
## Taking Time Tool

*I take time-in and time-away.*



**Concept:** There are many useful ways to use time intelligently for one's well-being and the well-being of others. When we choose how to use our time we can be more effective. Stepping back and taking Time-Away renews our resiliency. Taking Time-In (within oneself) to self-reflect leads to better self-understanding and more authentic connections with others.

**Hand Gesture:** Gently tap your wrist (an imaginary wrist-watch) with your index finger.



## Please & Thank You Tool

*I treat others with kindness and appreciation.*

**Concept:** Please and Thank You are "magic words" that make people feel good. Expressing gratitude and giving thanks are basic principles of kindness and generosity. This opens the doorway to intimacy and caring relationships. When added politely to a request, the word "please" encourages others to be helpful and kind. Saying "thank you" lets people know you value them. These simple words create warm connections with others.

**Hand Gesture:** Hold a pretend key and turn your wrist as if opening an imaginary lock.

## Apology & Forgiveness Tool

*I admit my mistakes and work to forgive yours.*



**Concept:** A sincere apology opens the door to self-responsibility and forgiveness. It takes self-esteem and inner strength to admit a mistake and do the “right” thing. Using the Apology & Forgiveness Tool is a step towards maturity. Forgiveness takes equal strength. It requires letting go of anger and judgment. It does not mean we have to forget, but there can be a willingness to forgive. If we are still holding the hot ember of anger, resentment, or hatred, we are the one still getting burned.

**Hand Gesture:** Clasp hands together as though gluing two sheets of paper together.



## Patience Tool

*I am strong enough to wait.*

**Concept:** Patience is the ability to wait quietly. Patience develops our capacity for tolerating situations that are not in our control. Children learn patience when we model it. If patience is not modeled, children may learn to be impatient, demanding, and impulsive.

**Hand Gesture:** Place palms together in front of you, fingers straight. Slowly rub hands together, slowly and gently. Feel the sensation of the hands warming each other.

## Courage Tool

*I have the courage to do the “right” thing.*



**Concept:** Courage is having inner strength and bravery to do the “right thing” even when it is difficult. When we feel troubled by our own or others’ behaviors, it takes courage to use our Tools when others are not using theirs. Helping children to have courage lets them explore the unfamiliar. Courage, from Latin *cor* (“heart”), means to act with “heart.” Acting with courage is following one’s heart.

**Hand Gesture:** Place one hand over your heart. Gently pat your chest while breathing in deeply (internally saying “Grow strong heart. Grow strong.”).