



Let's Take Our Time!

- All Ages



Schedule moments to unwind between activities to:

1. Help form closer group ties
2. Get to know your campers better
3. Foster a mindset that favors mutual assistance and inclusion for everyone
4. Help your campers wind down
5. Allow your campers to be more receptive and attentive during the next activity
6. End your activity on a pleasant note and reflect on it with your campers

There is more than one way to unwind!

Here is what can be found in the following game cards :

	Breathing game	Movement game	Creative game
The Relaxation Star	X		
From Head to Toe	X		
Jacob at Rest	X		
Hand Breathing	X		
Tree in a Storm		X	
Energy Circulation		X	
Imaginary Ladder		X	
Dance With Closed Eyes		X	
The Wind Down Wheel		X	
Labyrinth			X
The Creator			X
Relaxation Ideas		X	X

Tips and Tricks

During these unwinding moments, ask your campers to form a circle as often as possible to maintain the group's energy. This will also allow you to see everyone more easily.

Each camper is unique and may react differently to the methods used to wind down. Alternate between the different methods to ensure that you reach as many campers as possible.



All Ages



The Relaxation Star

Breathing Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask your campers to form a circle, eyes closed, lying on their backs, their heads pointing towards the middle of the circle, their arms alongside their bodies.

Counselor → Stand outside the circle so that you can observe the campers and move around them.

Steps

1. Let your campers breathe at their own pace.
2. After a few minutes, ask your campers to take five deep breaths (the belly and sides should expand). You can count the breaths out loud.
3. Ask your campers to breathe at their own pace.
4. After a few minutes, ask your campers to inhale for three seconds and exhale for five seconds. Repeat for five breaths.
5. Ask your campers to breathe at their own pace.



Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers to describe how they feel. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- Play the game seated or standing in a circle.
- Play the game on one leg, arms crossed.



All Ages



From Head to Toe

Breathing Game

DURATION: 8-10 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask your campers to form a circle, eyes closed, lying on their backs, their heads pointing towards the middle of the circle, their arms alongside their bodies.

Counselor → Stand outside the circle so that you can observe the campers and move around them.

Steps

1. Let your campers breathe at their own pace.
2. Ask your campers to direct their attention to a part of their body and to think about it in silence (e.g. “Pay attention to your toes. What do you feel? Tingling? Pulsing?”).
3. Continue with the other parts of the body, from head to toe!
4. Ask your campers to take three deep breaths before opening their eyes and slowly coming back to a seated position.



Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers to describe what they got out of the exercise. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- Ask your campers to move specific parts of their body (slowly, in circles, etc.).



All Ages



Jacob at Rest

Breathing Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES


Positioning

Campers → Ask your campers to form a circle, eyes closed, lying on their backs, their heads pointing towards the middle of the circle, their arms alongside their bodies.

Counselor → Stand outside the circle so that you can observe the campers and move around them.

Steps

1. Let your campers breathe at their own pace.
2. Ask your campers to clench (as tightly as they can) a specific part of the body (e.g. “Flex only your toes.”).
3. Have them continue clenching for five to 10 seconds before releasing.
4. Start with the toes and work your way up to the head or start from the head and work your way down to the toes.
5. Ask your campers to take three deep breaths before opening their eyes and slowly coming back to a seated position.



Psst! It's important to remind your campers that it's normal to think of something else during the game. They should acknowledge their thoughts before bringing their attention back to the exercise.

Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers to describe what they got out of the exercise. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- Play the game standing up.
 - Have your campers form pairs and mirror the game back to one another.
- ➔ Did you know that there are several recordings of this technique (called Jacobson) on YouTube?



All Ages



Hand Breathing

Breathing Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask your campers to form a circle, eyes closed, lying on their backs, their heads pointing towards the middle of the circle, their arms alongside their bodies.

Counselor → Stand outside the circle so that you can observe the campers and move around them.

Steps

1. Ask the campers to look at the palm of one of their hands.
2. Ask them to place the index finger of the opposite hand at the bottom of their palm, close to the wrist.
3. Ask them to take a deep breath, while keeping their eyes on their hand. On the inhalation, ask the campers to slide their index finger along the thumb until it reaches the tip. On the exhalation, ask them to slowly bring their index finger back to its initial position.
4. Repeat the same steps for each of the other fingers of the hand.



Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers to describe what they got out of the exercise. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- Do the same exercise with the top of the foot.
- Play the game in a seated position or standing up.



All Ages



Tree in a Storm

Movement Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask your campers to form a circle, standing with their backs straight and their eyes closed.

Counselor → Stand outside the circle so that you can observe the campers and move around them.

Steps

1. Ask your campers to raise their arms high above their heads.
2. Have each camper imagine that they are a tree, moving their arms like tree branches in the wind.
3. Guide your campers by describing the strength of the wind. The wind starts out very strong (e.g., "It's a storm!") before slowly dying down (e.g., "The sun is out and there's a gentle breeze.")
4. Ask your campers to adjust their arm movements based on the wind, just like the branches of a tree.
5. Ask your campers to take three deep breaths before opening their eyes and slowly lowering their arms.



Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers how they feel. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- You can experiment by trying other yoga postures with your campers. Please view the Aquatic Yoga and Zen Challenge activities for inspiration.
- With the youngest campers, you can suggest for them to imagine they're a flower that's slowly growing.



All Ages



Energy Circulation

Movement Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask the campers to spread out within the space so that everyone has room to move.

Counselor → Move within the space while providing instructions.

Steps

1. Ask the campers to walk within the space.
2. When you name a part of the body, they must move it rapidly at your signal (e.g., shake your legs, arms, hands).

Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers how they feel. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.



Variations

- Play the game without asking the campers to move within the space.
- Vary the types of movement (walk more slowly, backwards, etc.).
- Vary the intensity of the movement (move the arms in slow motion like you would in space, move your leg very quickly, etc.).
- Assign roles to the campers when they're in movement (act like a robot, an acrobat on a high wire, etc.).
- Ask the campers to name parts of their bodies.



All Ages



Imaginary Ladder

Movement Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask the campers to spread out within the space.

Counselor → Move within the space while giving instructions.

Steps

1. Ask the campers to walk within the space as though they're climbing an imaginary ladder.
2. Vary the types of ladders (e.g., larger, smaller).
3. Vary the types of movement (e.g., backwards, sideways).

Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers how they feel. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- Vary the object to climb (e.g., a box, a mountain, a tree).



All Ages



Dance With Closed Eyes

Movement Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask the campers to spread out within the space so that everyone has room to move.

Counselor → Walk around the space.

Steps

1. With or without music, ask the campers to take their places within the space.
2. Ask the campers to close their eyes.
3. Let the campers move as they see fit to the rhythm of the music or the imaginary music in their head.

Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers how they feel. You can also ask them to describe the imaginary rhythm inside their head. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.



All Ages



The Wind Down Wheel

Movement Game

DURATION: 5-8 MINUTES

Preparation Before the Game

Draw or make the Wind Down Wheel.

1. Draw or make a circle out of a piece of cardboard. Divide the circle into eight equal parts.
2. Inside each point, write down an action, an activity, a question or another thing that will allow the campers to wind down.
3. Make an arrow and insert it into the center of the circle (you must be able to turn it when you give it a gentle nudge).

Examples of what you can add to the circle:

- **Act as a guard** (remain standing, immobile, eyes closed, for two to three minutes)
- **Breathe!** (Ask the campers to close their eyes and take a deep breath while counting to 10 in their head.)
- **Take 12 steps** (ask the campers to close their eyes, take 12 stationary steps while breathing gently, before returning to the starting position)
- **Your favorite place** (ask the campers to close their eyes, imagine their favorite place and describe it)

Important: Adapt the game to different age groups.



Positioning

Campers → Ask the campers to sit in a circle.

Counselor → Stand outside the circle so that you can guide them.

Steps

1. Place the Wind Down Wheel in the center of the circle.
2. With each turn, designate a camper to spin the arrow.
3. Ask your campers to act out what is written where the arrow stops.

Variations

- Use one die rather than a wheel.



All Ages



Labyrinth

Creative Game

DURATION: 10-15 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask the campers to find a comfortable place to write.

Counselor → Move within the space while giving instructions.

Steps

1. Ask the campers to draw a labyrinth.
2. Redistribute the labyrinths to other campers in the group. Will they be able to find their way out?

Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers how they feel. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- You can also print the labyrinths and play the game only by distributing them to the campers.



All Ages



The Creator

Creative Game

DURATION: 10-15 MINUTES

Positioning

Campers → Ask your campers to find a comfortable place.

Counselor → Move within the space while providing instructions.

Steps

1. Ask the campers to create an abstract artwork using the materials provided (e.g., modeling clay, Lego blocks, etc.).
2. Once they complete their artworks, ask the campers to move around and say what they think of when they see the artwork.

Reflect With Your Campers

At the end of the game, ask your campers how they feel. They can answer out loud or in their head. What's important is that you ask the question in a way that allows them to analyze the sensations they experienced without judgment.

Variations

- Establish a theme.



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Relaxation Ideas

Need more ideas?

Wind Down in Movement

- Have the campers roll a tennis ball under their feet.
- Have the campers vigorously rub their hands together while slowly blowing into them.
- Do the frog: Jump 10 times in place while taking deep breaths.
- Dance in slow motion for 30 seconds. Repeat as needed.
- Pretend each camper is a large inflatable ball (arms in the air). The ball has a small puncture and is losing air ever so slowly as the campers descend towards the ground.
- Ask a camper to demonstrate a movement to wind down while the other campers mirror the movement.

Creative Wind Down

- Colour a mandala
- Do a puzzle
- Make a card castle
- Play tic-tac-toe

