

Using the body to find instant calm

1 The Butterfly Hug

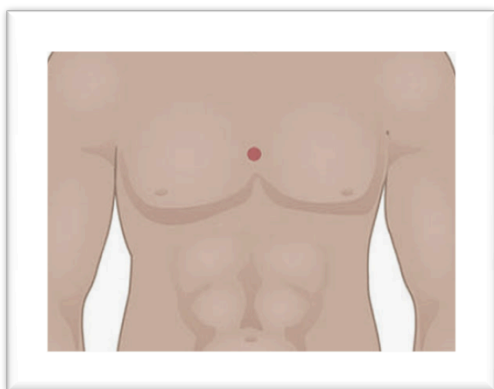
This calming tool was invented by trauma specialists in the aftermath of a natural disaster in Mexico City in 1998. **It uses bi-lateral stimulation** (stimulating the two sides of the brain) to calm anxious feelings.

Cross your arms in front of your chest, so each hand is resting gently just below the collarbone. Your hands are your 'butterfly wings'.

Gently tap each of these 'wings' in turn, by tapping the middle fingers of first one hand, then the other, lightly on the chest.

Tap for a minute or two, then stop and take one or two slow, deep breaths. Notice how you are feeling, then continue tapping again to increase your sense of calm, if you want.

You can watch a demonstration of the Butterfly Hug [here](#).



2 Sea of Tranquility

This pressure point is located four-finger-widths up from the base of the breastbone, in the centre of the chest. Use your fingertips to gently probe this area until you find a slight indentation. Place your palms together in front of your chest, fingers crossed (as though praying) and press the back of one thumb knuckle onto the pressure point. Breathe slowly and deeply while applying pressure (it often helps to keep your eyes closed while doing this, but it is not essential). As you breathe out, allow your head to relax downwards; as you breathe

in, bring your head slightly upwards, all the time applying light pressure with your thumb.

If you want to practise this exercise more discreetly (on a train or in company, for instance), simply allow one arm to cross your chest, and press on the point using one or two fingers.



3 Karate Chop

This exercise can be done anywhere, without being obvious to those around you, so it's particularly useful if you're in a stressful meeting. It involves tapping gently on the 'karate chop' part of your hand, which is on the side of the hand opposite the thumb, about half way down the point between the base of your little finger and your wrist. It's the part of your hand you would use to 'karate chop' something, but for this exercise you simply need to tap the point gently with the first two fingers of the other hand for a few

seconds, then swap and tap the 'karate chop' point of the other hand. Some people like to repeat the phrase "let it go" in their mind, gently and slowly, as they tap.