



Creating a Culture of Well-being: Health in Education Somatic Techniques

Somatic Technique: Butterfly Hug – October 2025

Somatic Technique: Butterfly Hug

What is the Butterfly Hug?

The Butterfly Hug is a simple self-administered technique to calm the nervous system and involves gentle tapping, similar to a butterfly's wings. The Butterfly Hug uses bilateral stimulation to help balance the brain's hemispheres and promotes emotional regulation.

Why does Butterfly Hug help?

Research suggests that engaging both sides of the body simultaneously (bilateral stimulation) through gentle tapping or hugging motions can activate the brain's natural soothing mechanisms (rest and digest) resulting in reduced anxiety and heightened emotional well-being.

[The Science Behind the Butterfly Hug: How it Helps Reduce Stress and Anxiety.](#)



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How to perform the Butterfly Hug

- **Find a comfortable position:** Sit in a chair or find a quiet spot where you can relax and focus.
- **Cross your arms:** Gently cross your arms over your chest, placing your hands on your upper arms or shoulders.
- **Start tapping:** Begin a gentle, rhythmic tapping motion with your hands, alternating between your left and right sides. The motion should feel like a gentle butterfly landing on your arms.
- **Breathe deeply:** As you tap, take slow, deep breaths in through your nose and out through your mouth. Allow your breath to flow naturally, bringing a sense of calm and relaxation with each exhale.
- **Focus on your emotions:** While performing the Butterfly Hug, direct your attention to the emotions or sensations you're experiencing. Acknowledge them without judgment, allowing yourself to fully embrace the present moment.
- **Continue for several minutes:** Repeat the tapping motion and deep breathing for at least five to ten minutes, or until you feel a noticeable shift in your emotional state.

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BrightenUp! Kids Podcast!

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[Butterfly Hug! 6-Minute Self-Soothing Meditation For Children Using The Butterfly Hug Technique.](#)



Questions?

Reach out to us at ode.healthyschools@ode.oregon.gov