



CAT PLATO  
SENSORY – MINDFULNESS  
PACKAGE

SENSORY  
REFLECTION  
BREATH  
MINDFULNESS





## THERAPEUTIC MASCOT



- Ears**  
Roll, knead
- Embroidery**  
Touch and massage with your fingertips
- Paws**  
Knot, grab, smooth out
- Sensory interior**  
Dip your fingers, knead
- Feet**  
Rub, tie together, tangle with paws

**Materials - minky, velvet**  
Explore textures with your fingers

**Loops**  
Interweave the tail, paws and legs

**Body**  
Roll it and place it on your stomach

**Tail**  
Interweave, rub with your fingers

**Sensory pill**  
Run your fingers along the tail



# CAT PLATO

## SENSORY - MINDFULNESS PACKAGE



### Therapeutic weighted mascot "Plato the Cat"

Plato the Cat is a special Companion: he activates the sense of touch, teaches the deep feeling of breathing, exercises fine motor skills, and exercises the child's feet.

### Thinking Book "Plato the Cat and the Puzzle of Bravery"

The Thinking Book "Plato the Cat and the Puzzle of Bravery" supports mutual activation of the right and left hemispheres of the brain, building the understanding of mindfulness in the meaning of "here and now".

### Brochure with breathing and gymnastic exercises

In this brochure you will find information on possible ways to use the mascot for breathing exercises and corrective foot gymnastics, as well as tips that will allow you to experience a satisfying adventure of finding your Bravest Bravery through an active conversation with the "Thinking Book".

**I hope that new experiences with sensory and mindfulness will allow you to discover a different form of play and support your child's development. Check additional information on the blog at [www.kotplaton.pl](http://www.kotplaton.pl)**





## BREATHING EXERCISES

# CAREFULLY OBSERVE YOUR BREATHING

Breathing exercises are one of the proven and effective tools that allow the child to discover his or her individual concentration on a specific moment - the "here and now" moment. Developing this type of focus in a child builds his/her general development capital in a safe way, minimizing the feeling of discomfort.

Breathing is a super power thanks to which the child improves the quality of his concentration, returns to the comfort zone in stressful situations and consciously experiences present moments, mindfully interpreting his emotions and safely naming and defining the stimuli coming from the outside world.

**The following exercises consist of two elements: instructions for carrying out the exercise itself and tips on questions or terms that can be addressed to the child during the exercise. Use them to engage your child in mindful play or guide each stage according to your intuition, speaking your common language.**

### Conscious observation of breathing

These are exercises that direct the child's attention to the natural course of the inhalation and exhalation process, i.e. noticing and observing the breath at a given moment. At this stage, we do not modify the breathing rhythm, we just carefully observe the way the air is inhaled and exhaled.

### Proprioceptive breathing with a weighted mascot

The effect of systematic breathing work with a weighted toy is the activation of deep sensation of the abdominal muscles during the breathing process. At this stage, the child actively and consciously works with the breathing technique and carefully modifies the course of the inhalation and exhalation process. By working with deep breathing, the child is able to cope with an uncomfortable situation on its own, bringing the body into a state of physiological respiratory balance.





## BREATHING EXERCISES

# CONSCIOUS OBSERVATION OF BREATHING

### Sit or lie down in a comfortable position.

- This may be your favorite position for lazing around, daydreaming or resting after a tiring day or activity.

### Bring awareness to your breathing.

- Notice what kind of breathing you rest comfortably with today: long, short, or maybe fast or slow? How do you feel when you breathe today? Are you calm? Upset? Happy? Sad? Or maybe scared? Your breathing is linked to your feelings. Notice what it is like here and now as you lie comfortably in a safe place. Notice what your breathing is like when you are sad, happy, angry, scared, and when you are calm and relaxed. Breathe carefully until you discover with what breath you are here and now with me today.

### Place your hands on your ribs and take a deep breath.

- Try to take a deep breath as if you were inhaling the scent of your favorite flower. Imagine what it smells like. Take a deep breath and exhale slowly. For a few breaths, bring your awareness only to your breathing. Notice how it is today: fast, slow, shallow or deep. Try to observe the moment when your ribs - under the influence of inhalation - spread to the sides and your chest fills with air. This is a sign that the breath has entered your body. It now fills every cell with the relaxing air of your favorite scent.

### Focus on the moment of exhalation.

- Gently open your mouth and, as you exhale, say the magically calming sound "hyyy" loudly. Feel the air leaving your chest with a "hyyy" and returning to the world around you. The air from your exhalation slowly fills the place where you relax with the super power of your mindfulness. Breathe for as long as you need. Watch the super power of your inhalation and exhalation work every time air enters your body and returns to the world. Once you become familiar with your exhalation, try to say the sound "hyyy" the next time you slowly exhale, but this time with your mouth closed and exhale through your nose.

### Place your left index finger under the two nostrils and bring your awareness to the temperature of your inhalation and exhalation.

- Observe the air you inhale and exhale. What temperature is it: is it warm or cold? Does the inhalation differ in temperature from the exhalation, or are they equally warm or cold?

### Plug the left nostril with your left index finger and place your right index finger just below the right nostril. Take a deep breath through the right nostril, wait 3 seconds. Then, close the right nostril with your right index finger, and take your left forefinger from the left nostril, place it under the open nostril and slowly release the air from it into the world.

- The super power of your inhalation and exhalation has its own temperature. Observe - using your finger under your open nostril - what the air feels like when you slowly and carefully inhale it into your body and exhale it back into the world. What kind of air comes to you? Warm or cold? What air comes out of your body and fills the world around you? Moist or maybe dry? Observe carefully what your own super power of conscious breathing is. Do not rush. Repeat the exercise for as long as you need.





## BREATHING EXERCISES

# PROPRIOCEPTIVE BREATHING WITH A WEIGHTED MASCOT

**Lie down in a comfortable position on your back. Place Cat Plato on your tummy. With either hand, grab the mascot by its tail. Feel the pill in the tail with your fingers and press it several times using your thumb and forefinger. Move the pill up and down according to today's rhythm of inhalation and exhalation.**

- As you lie down comfortably, feel your back touch the mat. Relax your legs. Place Plato's Cat on your tummy and feel its weight. Try to raise and lower it as you inhale and exhale. Let Plato naturally rise and fall with the breath with which you come to the mat today. Don't correct your breathing, let it be as it is today, without any changes. Let the mascot become friends with your breath today as it is: happy, sad, angry, or maybe worried. Then, with either hand, grab the tail. Use your fingers to find the pill in it. Once you find it, try to move the pill up and down according to your breathing - the way it is today, here and now, when you lie comfortably on the mat.

**Moving the pill in the mascot's tail up and down - take a deep breath in and out.**

- When you are ready, inhale through your nose as if you were smelling the scent of your favorite flower and let the air into your body. Wait three seconds and exhale through your nose, saying "hyyy" with your mouth closed. If you can't say the magic "hyyy" with your mouth closed yet, that's okay. Open your mouth and say "hyyy" loudly and slowly. You'll see, at some point you'll have the super power to say "hyyy" without opening your mouth. Don't rush anything, just practice as you feel comfortable and pleasant at this moment "here and now".
- Once you have become familiar with your breathing, direct your awareness to Cat Plato and the pill in its tail. Feel how heavy the mascot is. Notice how it rises and falls with your breathing. Use your fingers to feel the pill in your cat's tail and move it slowly up and down in line with your breathing. Notice how you inhale and exhale together with the mascot. How does it feel to let Plato surf the wave of your breath on your belly? Breathe like this for as long as you need.
- Remember that you can invoke the super power of your breath in any situation: when you feel insecure, when you are sad, when you feel bad, when you are angry or when you are afraid of something. Breathe as you would during exercise. Plato is a great companion and helps you work with your breath whenever you need it. Take him with you and combine your super powers. Place Plato on your tummy or - if you can't - on your knees, grab the pill in the tail and move it up and down, directing your awareness to your breathing. This is the super power of breathing that is always with you, helping you find a safe place as you inhale and exhale. May mindfulness be with you, my Courageous Companion.







## MINDFULNESS IN PLAY AND GYMNASTICS



### Advantages of playing with a weighted mascot

The effect of systematic breathing work with a weighted toy is the activation of deep feeling of the abdominal muscles during the breathing process. At this stage, the child actively and consciously works with the breathing technique and carefully modifies the course of the inhalation and exhalation process. By working with deep breathing, the child is able to cope with an uncomfortable situation on its own, bringing the body into a state of physiological respiratory balance.



## GYMNASTICS WITH PLATO THE CAT

# MASSAGE OF THE POSTERIOR FASCIAL TAPE ON THE FOOT

**Roll Plato into a log (see the photo) and secure it against unraveling by knotting the cat's legs and arms. Leave the tail loosely on the side. Put your heel on the mascot. Take three deep breaths.**

- Once you place your heel on the mascot, close your eyes and take three deep breaths. Inhale the air as if you were smelling the scent of your favorite flower, and while exhaling, say the sound "hyyy" loudly or with your mouth closed. Do not rush. Bring awareness to your breath and become friends with it as it is "here and now" while preparing for the massage.

**Start turning your heel into Plato's Cat and massage it, performing the following movements alternately: move the heel from right to left and vice versa, and move the heel back and forth.**

- Once you notice the rhythm of your inhalation and exhalation today, bring your awareness to your heel. Press it against the mascot as hard as you feel like today. How do you feel when you dip your toe into the mascot? What emotions accompany you when you dip your heel in soft, mascot fur? Then start screwing your heel into the material, moving your heel up and down and side to side. Observe your heel. What feelings do you experience during the massage? What does your heel and body feel? Do as many repetitions as you need.

**For a few slow inhalations and exhalations, twist your heel into the mascot in the intuitive way that gives you the most pleasure.**

- Make friends with your heel. Maybe there are places on it that require additional massaging? Or maybe other heel movements after the mascot give you more pleasure and relaxation? Experiment a little according to what your heel tells you. Continue your massage for as long as you need.

**Slide slowly (consciously pressing the mascot) along the outer edge of the foot to its front part. While moving, stop for a moment on the arch of your foot. Massage the arch by pressing the foot into the mascot.**

- Once your heel is relaxed, start slowly - pressing your leg against the mascot - to move to the front of the foot on its outer side. There is a very nice place on your foot - it is the arch. Stay on it for a moment. Press your foot against the mascot as hard as you want. Remember to inhale and exhale. Then twist your foot into the mascot as if you were trying to sweep away a disturbing crumb. Do the exercise for as long as you need.

**Move to the front of your foot. Place the lozenge in the tail in the area below the bone, in the indentation under the cushion located under the big toe. Pull your toes up. Space them wide apart.**

- Once the arch of your foot is relaxed, move your foot to the very front. Stop here for a moment. Pull your toes up and move them as much as you want. Turn your attention to your foot and feel what movements give it the most pleasure. Do them alternately slowly and quickly. Now try to spread your fingers wide apart in a fan shape. Observe the spaces between the toes. Experience what finger movements are possible for you in this position and which ones are difficult for you. Is there a setting that relaxes you, or maybe there is one that causes your entire foot to tense up. Listen to your body and respond to the messages it sends you. Stay in the exercise for as long as you need. Remember to breathe!







## GYMNASTICS WITH PLATO THE CAT

**Spread your toes and, bending your knee, shift your weight to the front of your foot and wrap your toes around the rolled ball. Remember to keep your heel firmly on the ground. Pressing the front of the foot against the mascot, perform a transverse massage, slowly moving the foot from right to left and vice versa.**

- Take a few deep breaths. Remember to say the magic sound "hyyy" as you exhale into the world. You can do it loudly or with your mouth closed. Breathe however you feel comfortable here and now. Slowly bend the knee of the leg that is standing with your foot on the mascot and try to transfer all your weight to Cat Plato. Let him make friends with him. Stay in this position for a moment, for a few breaths. Spread your toes and try to curl them around the mascot as if you were trying to hug it with your toes. Move your foot in this position up and down and sideways, carefully identifying places that require additional pressure or massaging. Make friends with the front of your foot. If you find a place on it that requires stronger pressure on Cat Plato - stop and stay in this place for as many breaths as you need. Experiment and discover the places that are most important for you to relax and massage here and now. Remember to breathe.

**Move your foot from top to bottom over the entire mascot according to your intuition.**

- Now is the moment when you decide which part of the foot you want to massage and how. There are no orders here, it's just you, your foot and your friendship. Listen carefully to what is happening on your foot. Exercise for as long as you need.

**Stand on the mat. Spread your legs hip-width apart, tuck your tailbone forward, close your eyes, straighten up, lower your arms along your body.**

- Once your foot is relaxed, stand steadily on the mat. Spread your legs hip-width apart, roll your hips forward as if you were trying to tuck a fluffy tail under you. Close your eyes and let your hands relax. Take a deep breath and bring your mind to your relaxed foot. Feel the differences between your feet. Focus on them for a few breaths. Try to notice how you stand on the massaged foot as opposed to standing on the other, not yet relaxed leg. Listen carefully to the messages your feet are sending you. How does a massaged foot feel? How does a foot feel when it is just waiting for a massage? What are your feet like now? Light or heavy? Observe carefully and breathe for as long as you need to.

**Repeat the massage on the other foot. At the end of the massage, stand steadily on the mat again. Spread your legs hip-width apart, tuck your tailbone forward, close your eyes, straighten your arms along your body.**

- Your feet are already massaged and relaxed. Once again, place them firmly on the mat. Spread your legs hip-width apart. Tuck your hips forward as if you were trying to tuck a fluffy tail. Bring your awareness to your legs? How do the left and right feet feel now? How do your legs feel? How do you feel? Do you feel different than before the massage? What is your breathing like now? Is it different from the breathing with which you started the exercise? Bring awareness to yourself for a few breaths. Stay on the mat as long as you need. Thank yourself for the time you have devoted to being "here and now" for yourself and your body. Being mindful of your breathing and responding to the signals coming from your body is the most beautiful gift you can give yourself every day. May mindfulness be with you, my Courageous Companion.



## COLOR THE PLOT IN YOUR OWN WORDS

The Thinking Book "Plato the Cat and the Puzzle of Bravery" is written using two developmental forms: mind maps and a picture book. On the pages of the book, both methods intertwine - supporting the work of the right and left hemispheres of the brain - while learning about the adventures of Plato the Cat and the Courageous Companions. You don't read this book, you talk about it with the child, not using the author's words, but using the reader's phrases. This is where the super power of the book lies, which step by step helps you build a relationship with your child based on safety and trust.

The task of the parent, educator or therapist is to develop the entries written on mind maps using their own words, abbreviations or phrases that are important, personal and understandable to the child in his or her everyday life "here and now". The young reader, in turn, focuses on the illustrations - which stimulate the right hemisphere in terms of colors - and help him conduct a dialogue about the book's plot.

**The combination of two worlds: the visual world of a young reader with a gentle direction to the plot through the words of the caregiver, opens up a huge space of opportunities to get to know the child, yourself and, above all, spend valuable time together. The book is an unobtrusive invitation to open up and be mindful of each other.**



### Talk while reading the Thinking Pages

"Infinitely many stories in one Thinking Book. How is this possible? The open formula of text and image stimulates the imagination, inviting the child and parent to creatively co-create the plot, and also creates the opportunity to dynamically change it. The content discussed deepens reflection and supports the search for one's own strengths, and even talents. This book also inspires people to creatively go beyond its pages with ideas for various activities, e.g. artistic, motor.

**Maria Szecówka-Nowak**  
Psychological Center for  
Diagnosis and Development



READ CONSCIOUSLY

## HOW TO READ THINKING PAGES?

**Prepare your child to talk about the plot of the Thinking Book. First, choose any page of the book or let your child choose the page that interests him the most.**

- I suggest starting with the page with Your Courageous Companion. You can place the toy on your child's lap, tummy or allow him to play freely with the toy while reading a book. The mascot will allow the child to calm down and focus on the book. The tangible closeness of the book's hero will allow you to build step by step attentiveness to its content. If you only work with a book, let your child hold their favorite stuffed animal while reading. Also allow you to choose the page that will appeal to your little reader the most.

**Invite your child to dialogue with you: mentally read any entry on the mind map and recreate it for your child using your own words.**

- When quoting a map entry, it is important that the words are understandable to the child at his developmental stage. Maybe these will be some special - known only to the child - mental abbreviations or diminutives? Among younger children, these may be syllables or onomatopoeias. It is important that talking about the entries on the map takes place in a comfortable environment with words that are child-friendly, easy to understand and interpret "here and now". It is an invitation to talk together in a safe world completely understandable to young readers.

**Carefully observe your child's reactions to your words, give him time to read the book without rushing. Develop ideas on mind maps in a way that is understandable to your child, using phrases that are simple and attractive at their developmental stage.**

- Give your child time when working with the selected page. Don't rush anything. Gently suggest what is happening in the book by explaining entries on mind maps - do not impose anything. Leave the child space for his own interpretation, observations and reflection. Silence and concentration are also welcome and sometimes very necessary to collect your thoughts and put them into a logical statement. Therefore, it is very important to give your child space and time to think about the plot of the book. Perhaps the illustration will tell the young reader something completely contradictory to the words on the map. Let it happen. At this point, you are building a relationship of mindfulness and showing your child that his or her receipt of the book is important to you. Focus all your attention on the "here and now" moment that you are experiencing together.

**Talk to your child about one page a day according to the tips above**

- You can read the book in chronological order or at random - choosing a page each day. The chronology of reading is not that important, because each page can be a separate story about the Courageous Companion. The most important thing here is the time spent together and mutual attentiveness to each other while sharing stories about the adventures of the book's characters.







MEET ALL THE COURAGEOUS COMPANIONS



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