

# You<sup>th</sup>Start

## ENTREPRENEURIAL CHALLENGES

## Activate and Concentrate



Physical activities that combine rhythmic exercises, kinaesthetic learning and tuina can help us activate our brain and improve our concentration because these movements challenge our brain and thereby enhance our coordination, our ability to think and our mental fitness.

## Classroom exercises

# Youth Start Entrepreneurial Challenges Programme

based on the TRIO Model for Entrepreneurship Education – [www.youthstart.eu](http://www.youthstart.eu)

Core Entrepreneurial Education	Entrepreneurial Culture			Entrepreneurial Civic Education
 <b>Idea Challenge</b>  <b>Hero Challenge</b>	 <b>Empathy Challenge</b>	 <b>Storytelling Challenge</b>	 <b>Buddy Challenge</b>	 <b>My Community Challenge</b>
 <b>My Personal Challenge</b>  <b>Lemonade Stand Challenge</b>	 <b>Perspectives Challenge</b>	 <b>Trash Value Challenge</b>	 <b>Open Door Challenge</b>	 <b>Volunteer Challenge</b>
 <b>Real Market Challenge</b>  <b>Start Your Project Challenge</b>	 <b>Extreme Challenge</b>	 <b>Be A Yes Challenge</b>	 <b>Expert Challenge</b>	 <b>Debate Challenge</b>

The TRIO Model is a holistic teaching system that encompasses three segments:

“**Core Entrepreneurial Education**” comprises basic qualifications for entrepreneurial thinking and acting, more precisely the competence to develop and implement ideas.

“**Entrepreneurial Culture**” refers to the promotion of a culture of open-mindedness, empathy, teamwork, creativity, goal setting and self-initiative as well as risk-taking and awareness of risks.

“**Entrepreneurial Civic Education**” aims at enhancing social competences and empowering students in their role as citizens who are willing to assume responsibility for themselves, others and the environment.

Each challenge belongs to one of the **18 challenge families**, and each challenge family pertains to one of the three TRIO segments. A challenge family may be comprised of several challenges on different levels. The letter codes given in the teaching materials indicate the following teaching levels:

A1 – primary level; A2 – secondary level I; B1, B2 and C1 – different sub-levels within secondary level II. Each level builds on the preceding level.



# You<sup>th</sup> Start and learning with “head, heart and hand”

The “You<sup>th</sup> Start Entrepreneurial Challenges” programme is a holistic teaching system that conveys certain competences intended to promote self-determined ways of thinking and acting: empathy with others, goal-oriented thinking, personal initiative, the development of creative ideas and the confident implementation of projects. The programme supports children and adolescents in developing their potentials.

Physical activities that combine rhythmic exercises, kinaesthetic learning and tuina can help us activate our brain and improve our concentration because these movements challenge our brain and thereby enhance our coordination, our ability to think and our mental fitness.

The “Youth Start Entrepreneurial Challenges” programme is based on the TRIO Model, which you will find explained on the opposite page. The individual challenges deal with topics from a variety of areas: society, sustainability, economics, personal development, social awareness, project management and many more. The duration of the challenges varies and may range from a few periods to a year-long project.

You can download all challenges at [www.youthstart.eu](http://www.youthstart.eu) and may integrate them into your lessons as you see fit. The programme is complemented by mindfulness exercises and by the physical exercises to stimulate your students and improve their concentration collected in this document. For video clips please see the “Mind & Body” section on our website.

Eva Jambor und Johannes Lindner  
[www.ifte.at](http://www.ifte.at), [www.youthstart.eu](http://www.youthstart.eu)



# Exercises to activate and concentrate

The following 23 exercises activate our brain and enhance our concentration in different ways, some even have a positive effect on both. They are easy to learn, and you can adapt them to the individual classroom situation.

These exercises have been selected from areas focusing on holistic learning (experiencing the world with all the senses):

1. Rhythmics/Body percussion
2. Edu-Kinesthetics (study of the movement of the body)
3. Tui Na - functional gymnastics used in traditional Chinese medicine

The exercises are taken from my teaching practice as a music and movement trainer at kindergartens, primary schools and the BAKIP (upper secondary school for kindergarten teachers), as well as my work with disabled children and teenagers.

Most of the exercises can be adapted according to the stage of the students' development, as each sequence can be performed in a simplified or more difficult variation.

### **Rhythmics/Body percussion - Exercises 5-14, 17**

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Rhythmic music pedagogy or "rhythmics" is based on every human's basic need for movement, stimulating our mental activity, our senses and our actions. Rhythmics combines the experience of music with our experience of movement and enhances musical and motor skills. Experiencing something with all the senses (seeing, hearing, touching, feeling) or completing tasks, while combining them with music and movement, puts our reflexes, our coordination abilities, fine motor skills and agility to the test. That way, children playfully develop competencies such as attentiveness, concentration, receptivity and concept formation.

Living in a high-tech environment that overstimulates our senses often results in lack of exercise, attention difficulties or concentration problems as well as memory deficits. A number of different tasks and exercises from the field of sensory training, combined with music and movement, can help us work against these after-effects efficiently.

Relaxation exercises are always related to our own body and thus help us improve our body awareness and strengthen our self-perception. They also further a child's development.

Performing different rhythms with body instruments (clapping, slapping, stomping, singing) contributes significantly to holistic learning. Body percussion (exercises 9-12) is used to experience rhythm in a variety of ways. We can improve our rhythmic potential by experiencing it physically, mentally and emotionally, thus becoming aware of it actively.

## Activate and Concentrate

You<sup>th</sup> Start Entrepreneurial Challenges



The "Mirroring Exercise" (No. 8) is described as "leading and following", which is a form of communication as well as a principle in the teaching of rhythmic. This method promotes social learning and communication skills, strengthens trust and enhances concentration and perception of each student. You will find that this principle of leading and following keeps reoccurring in different rhythmic-exercises. One exercise uses music as a medium and then movement. At other times it appeals to the children's perception or their social learning.

### **Edu-Kinesthetics (study of the movement of the body) - exercises 1-4, 15-16, 18-20**

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The findings and effects of the exercises from Edu-Kinesthetics promote holistic learning. Cross-over (contralateral) movements activate both brain hemispheres.

Other movement patterns improve the communication between the forebrain, which enables us to learn new things without stress, and the hindbrain, which stores everything we've learnt so far.

Activating the meridian system harmonises our psychological condition and stimulates the flow of electromagnetic energies in our body. This increases our willingness to be receptive to new knowledge, be attentive and participate actively.

### **Tui Na - functional gymnastics used in traditional Chinese medicine - exercises 21-23**

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Owing to my additional training and experience as Tui Na practitioner (hands-on body treatment used in traditional Chinese medicine), I also wanted to include exercises from that field of expertise.

This manual bodywork involves Chinese functional gymnastics and not only boosts our health but also increases our body awareness and thus provides the basic requirement for holistic learning.

Chinese functional gymnastics strengthens and stretches our muscles and joints, improves the blood circulation of the organs and thus enhances our physical flexibility.

In addition to strengthening our body, functional gymnastics also has a calming effect on our spirit. When carried out regularly, Chinese functional gymnastics is said to have a life-prolonging effect.

Veronika Pengg (Author)

Music and movement pedagogue and Tui Na trainer



# 1. Gorilla – waking up your spirit

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate meridians, enhance concentration

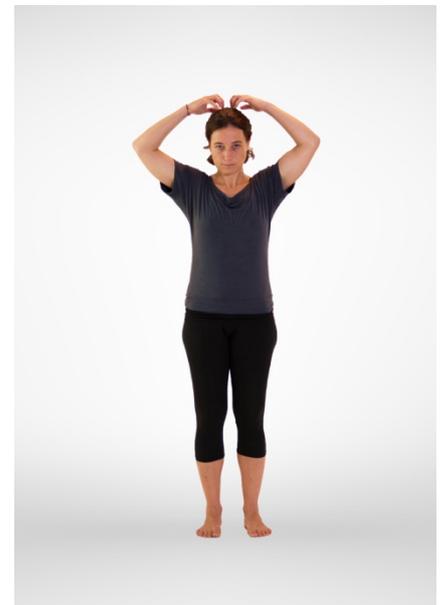
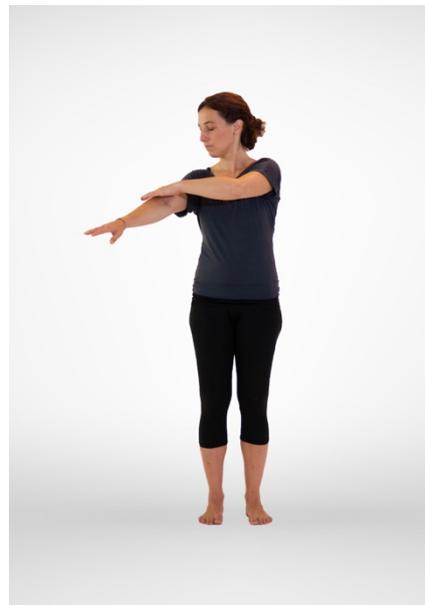
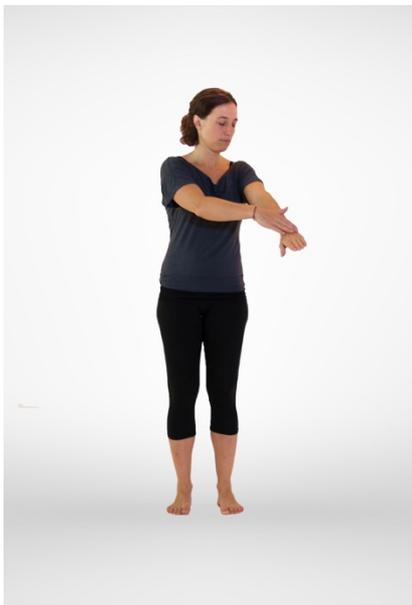
**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

With your right palm, start patting the inside of your left arm. Starting from the shoulder, go all the way down towards your fingertips. Then turn your arm so that your palm is facing down and continue patting the outside of your arm all the way back up to your shoulder. Now let your arms hang down loosely and shake them out. Repeat this exercise with the other arm. When you've activated both your arms, tap the top of your head with your fingertips, starting on both sides down the centre parting of your hairline. Continue at the back of your head, along your neck and the side of your body, down your back and bottom, then further along your thigh and lower leg to the toes.

Move up again along the inside of your legs, over your belly until you finish thumping the upper part of your sternum like a drum.

Repeat this exercise 2-3 times.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*





## 2. Tiger

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Activate, reduce aggression  
**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

Imagine you're a wild tiger in the jungle, and you have long sharp claws. In front of you is a tree on which you want to sharpen your claws.

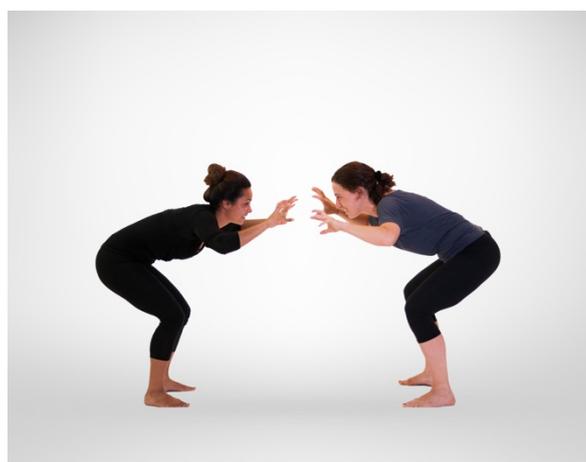
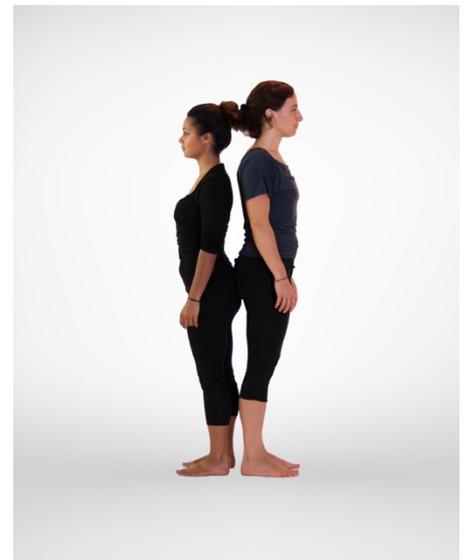
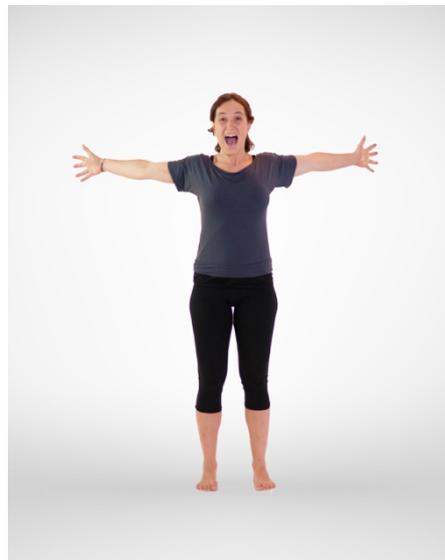
While exhaling, go into a crouch. Stretch your arms out in front of you. Breathing in loudly through your nose and looking angry, you then stand up again. Imagine that you dig your claws into the bark of the tree. Exhaling, go back into a crouch.

Repeat this exercise six times. After the sixth repetition, you just lift your paws to your tummy. Cross your arms and while opening your arms again as far as possible, release a scream from deep within.

Before you start this exercise, see to it that there is enough space so that the children don't yell at each other. The exercise is best performed in a circle.

Variation: You stand back to back with another student, then breathe in and out three times. After the third time, you jump around at each other like two battling tigers.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*





# 3. Cook's Hook-Ups while seated

**Age group:** A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Enhance concentration, balance energy, mental balance and calmness

**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

Sit in a chair, upright, and place both your feet on the floor. Slowly bring together your fingertips of both hands. Your breathing should be calm and deep. While inhaling through your nose, lift the tip of your tongue to the roof of your mouth, just behind your incisors. While exhaling through your mouth, have your tongue touch the lower palate.

Take a minute to do this exercise.

Cook's hook-ups help to balance the flow of energy in the meridians. The more often children do this exercise, the longer they are able and willing to remain in this position. This exercise helps them find their balance and creates a calm atmosphere. It is very useful when introducing a new topic.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*





# 4. Thinking cap while seated

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate meridians, enhance concentration

**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

Roll out and pull away slightly the outer rim of your ears with your thumb and forefinger. Start at the tip of your ears and move down to the earlobes. Repeat this exercise several times.

The "thinking cap" draws the children's attention to the ears, and activates 400 acupressure points! In addition, this exercise stimulates the centre of the nervous tissue running through the length of the brain stem.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*





# 5. Patting

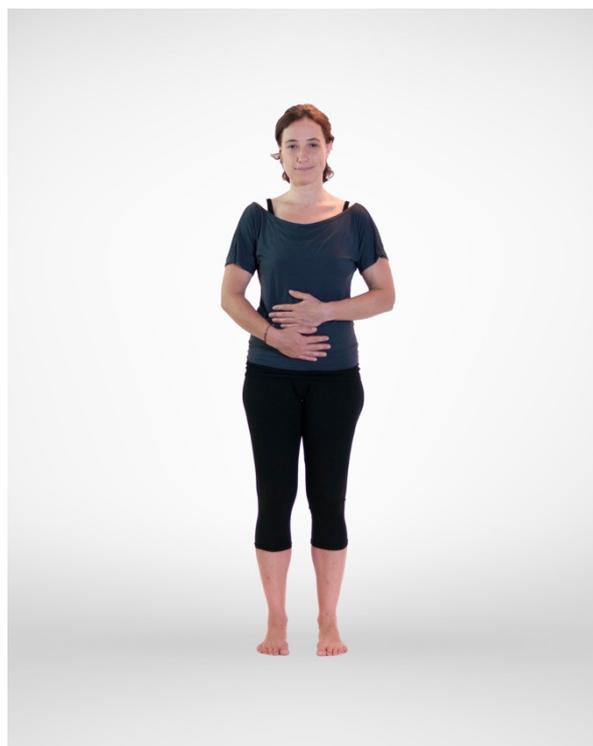
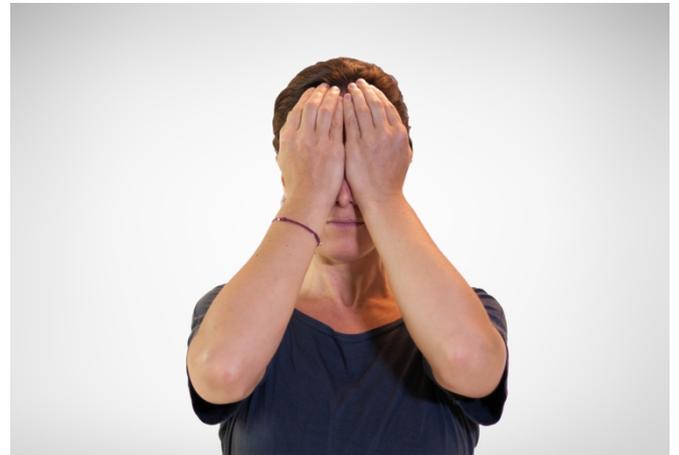
**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate meridians, enhance concentration

**Origin:** Rhythmics

Start patting the top of your head with your fingertips (imagine raindrops falling on your head). Then cup your hands over your eyes. After that, start patting your left arm from the shoulder downwards – starting at the inside. Now turn your arm so that your palm is facing down and continue patting the outside of your arm all the way back up to your shoulder. Do the same with your right arm.

At the end, put one hand on your navel, the other below and breathe "into your hands".





# 6. Cross-over exercise

**Age group:** a. for B1, B2, C1  
b. for A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate, centre

**Origin:** Rhythmics

- a. **Sitting down:** Cross your right arm over the left. Stretch out your legs and cross them the opposite way, i.e. your left leg over your right. Now rotate your wrists until the fingers are toward the body and draw your hands to the chest while breathing in and out deeply.

After that, do the exercise in reversed order, starting with your left arm crossed over your right arm and crossing your legs the other way.

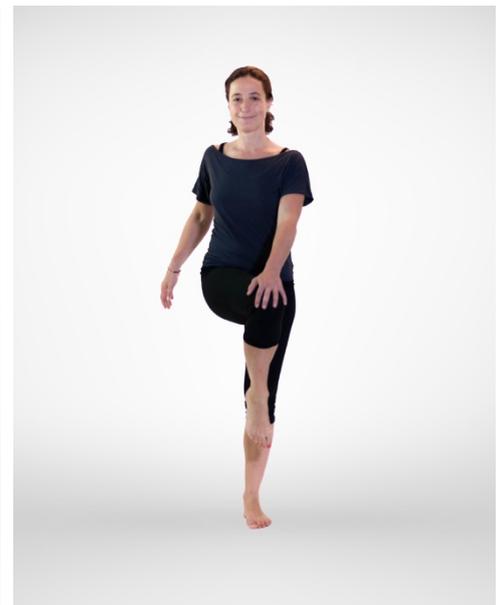
- b. **Standing:** Lift your right leg to hip level, your right hand touches the right knee, then set your foot back onto the floor. Now lift your left leg and touch your left knee with your left hand.

Repeat this exercise four times.

Then do the same exercise but crossing over. Lift your right leg to hip level while your left arm touches the inside of your right knee. Now you lift your left leg while your right hand touches the inside of the left knee.

Repeat four times.

As a variation, you can also combine both exercises: four times in parallel (touch right arm to right leg, then left arm to left leg), then four times criss-crossed (right arm and left leg, left arm and right leg).



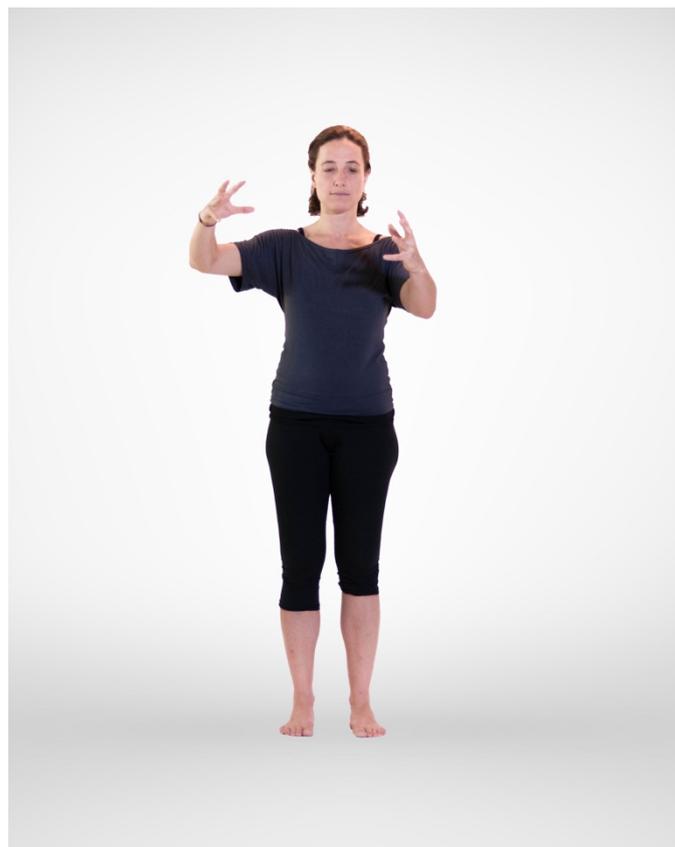


## 7. Energy ball

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Concentrate, focus, relax  
**Origin:** Rhythmics

Imagine you are holding a ball in your hands (first open your arms wide), which you squeeze together until your fingertips touch.

Imagine packing all of your knowledge into this ball to "keep it safe".





# 8. Mirroring exercise

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Activate, promote cooperation  
**Origin:** Rhythmics

Person A faces a second person B.

"A" now shows a movement that "B", as his/her mirror, has to imitate. The movements may be small in size or big, "square", round etc. However, they should always be made while facing each other, so that the other person can imitate the movements well.

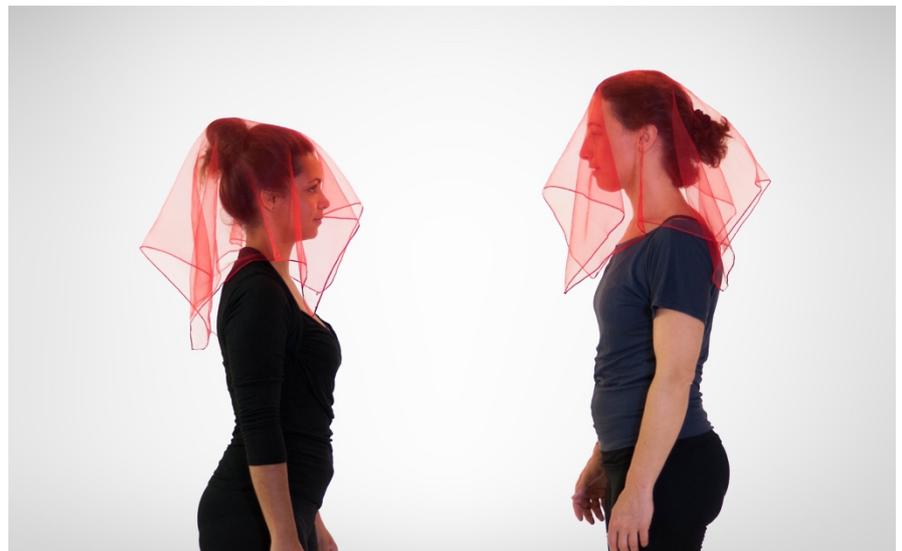
Then swap roles.

This exercise is often used in rhythmics to build and strengthen a relationship:

- when taking responsibility as a leader
- in order to trust as a follower
- to enhance concentration

Reflect: Did I prefer to follow or to lead? Did the other person lead me well? What could be improved?

*Source: B. Stummer: "Rhythmisch-musikalische Erziehung"*





# 9. Body percussion in two voices

**Age group:** a. for A1, A2, B1, B2, C1;  
b. for B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate, concentrate, strengthen sense of rhythm, enhance coordination

**Origin:** Body percussion / Rhythmics

a) **easy:** RHYTHM in two voices

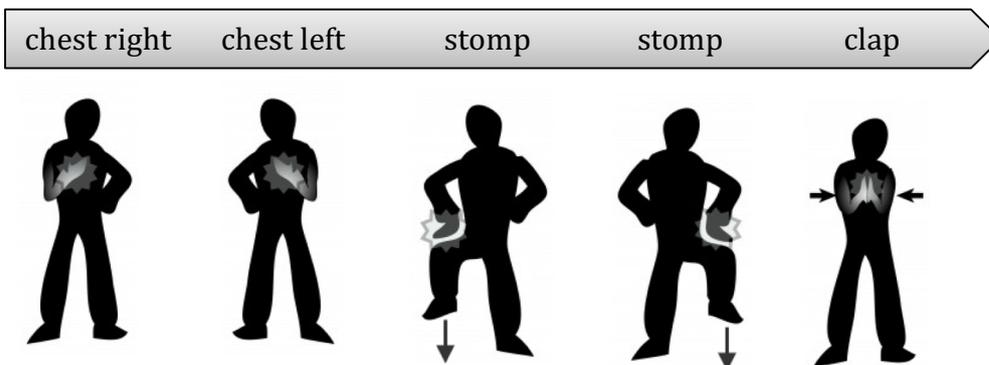
Warm-up: four-four time: 1 2 3 4

GIR – Everybody walks around at his/her pace until all find a joint tempo.

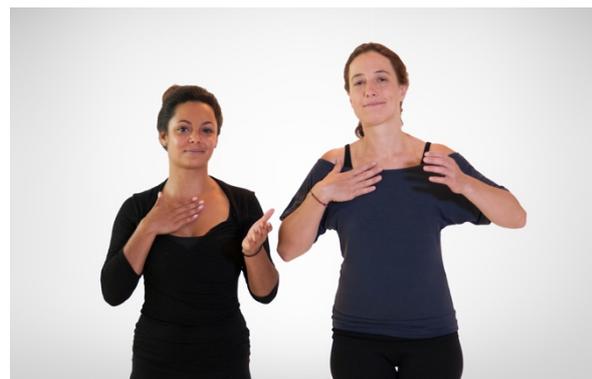
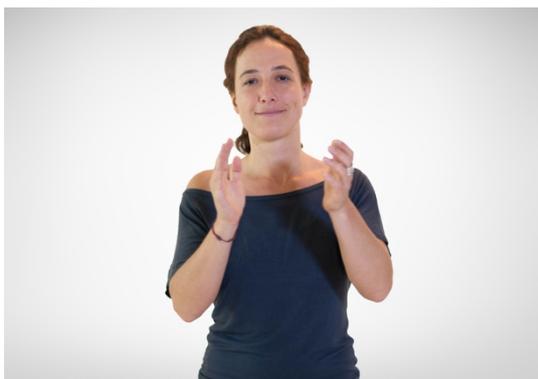
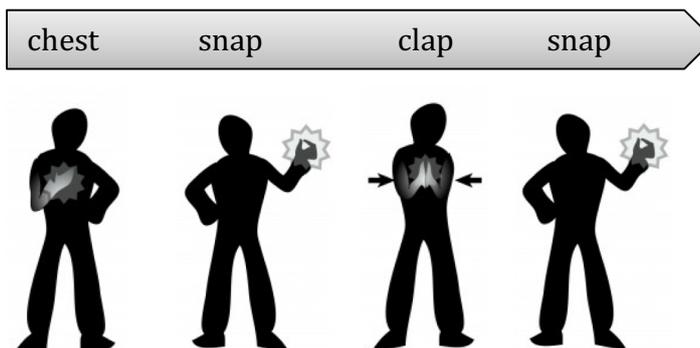
– 1 EMPHASISE (stomp)

– Clap on 4 (first clap your own hands then your partner's hands)

## 1. Stomp-stomp-clap: I tiki



## 2nd voice: Pussy cat

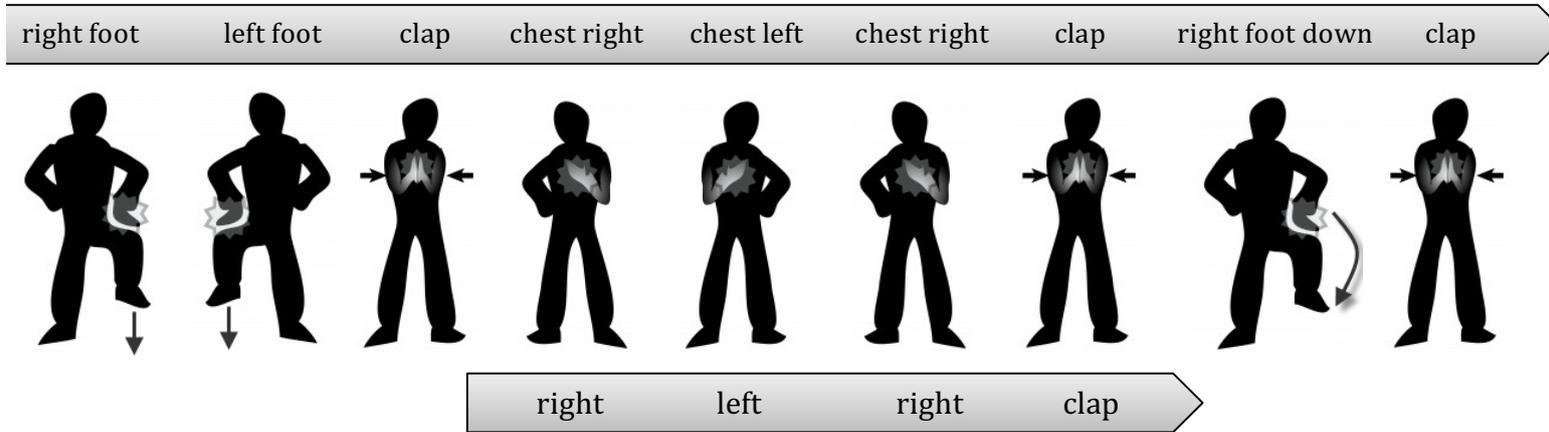


# Activate and Concentrate

You<sup>th</sup> Start Entrepreneurial Challenges



## b) intermediate: "Schuhplattler" entire phrase: Speed up!





# 10. Rhythmic ladder

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate, strengthen sense of rhythm, enhance coordination, taking the initiative

**Origin:** Body percussion / Rhythmics

### „Fill ins“

While the group is playing the rhythm, each student in a row tries to play a counterpart to the prescribed rhythm, like a "solo" (clapping, slapping, stomping, singing).

### „Rhythmic ladder “

First, the rhythm is introduced:

Stomp your feet four times

Slap your thighs four times

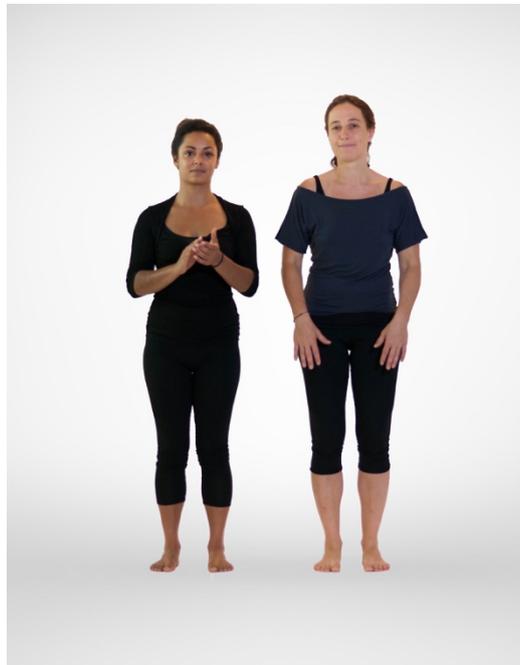
Clap four times

Snap four times (alternately with your right/left hand)

Stomp once, slap once, clap once, snap once, stomp your right foot once.

- four-voice canon

The rhythmic ladder is a rhythm training where we use our hands and feet but also talk, clap, stomp, sing – (rap), hiss and make many other body sounds (produced by our own body).





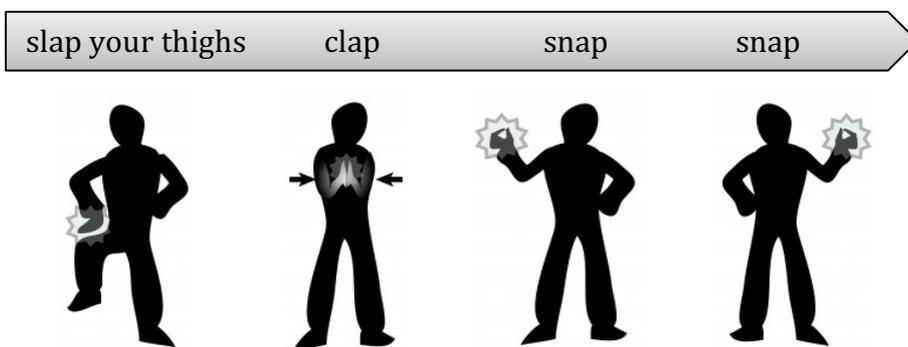
# 11. Concentration

**Age group:** A1, A2  
**Goal:** Enhance concentration, improve memory, coordination of the right and left brain and sense of rhythm  
**Origin:** Body percussion / Rhythmics

This rhythm game can be used as name game.

CON- CEN- TRA- TION

Concentration now begins (double tempo)



# 12. Song „Tumbala“

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Concentrate, enhance attentiveness  
**Origin:** Body percussion / Rhythmics

TUMBALA: First, you sing the song together, then add the rhythm with the different steps and clapping combinations. The combination of song and rhythm increases attentiveness and concentration. Dancing in a group promotes social learning.

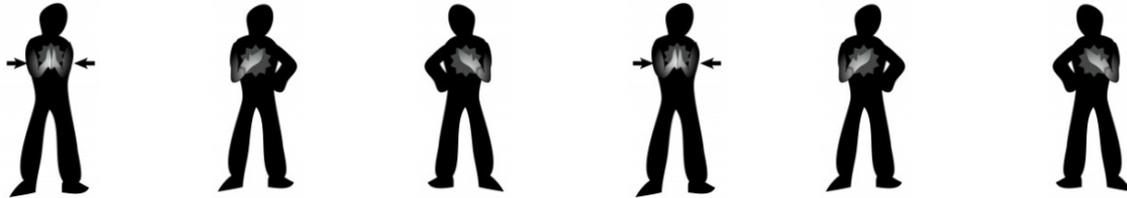
Song "Tumbala": see below

*Source: Ruth Schneidewind: "Der Fernseher ist kaputt"*



# Percussion accompaniment for the song

clap      chest right      chest left      clap      chest right      chest left



right thigh, left thigh (front)      right thigh, left thigh (sides)



**Last bar:**

clap      chest right      chest left      clap right      clap left      stomp right



**Ostinato accompaniment using body percussion:**

Standing in pairs, form two circles and perform the body sound gestures with the person standing opposite you, clapping your partner's hands instead of your own. At the end of the song (on "tum") the inner circle jumps to the next person on their left. Speed up gradually.

**Train your motor skills**

Invent your own texts, sing the new verses in varying expressions, matching your body tension for the body sound gestures accordingly (e. g. clapping tiredly, mysteriously, angrily etc.)

**Stimulate your linguistic imagination**

improvise with expressive speech and body movements

Dm      Am  
Tum - ba - la tum - ba - la wan - ja wan - ja,  
Dm      Am  
tum - ba - la tum - ba - la kan - ja kan - ja,  
Dm      Am  
tum - ba - la tum - ba - la wa - ki - tu - ka,  
Dm      Am      Dm  
tum - ba - la tum - ba - la tum.



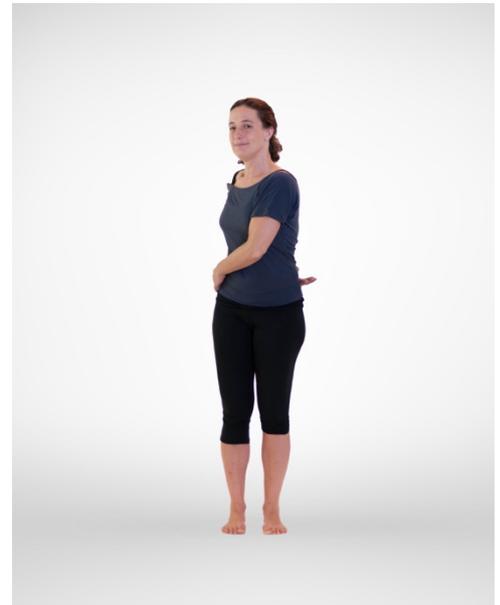
## 13. Dangling arm exercise

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate, improve your breathing and body awareness

**Origin:** Rhythmics

Both arms hang loosely next to your body. Now swing them back and forth on the right and left side so they form increasing half circles. Breathe out during this exercise.



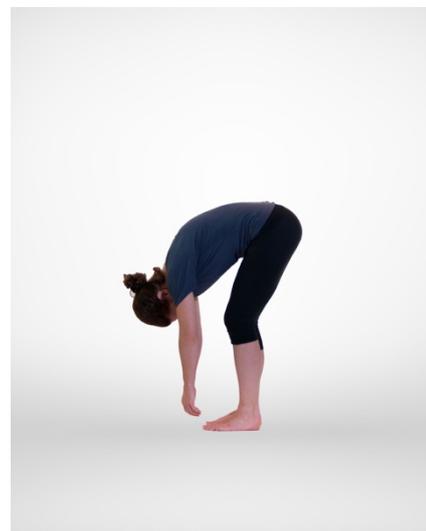
## 14. Rolling Down

**Age group:** B2, C1

**Goal:** Concentrate, straighten your posture

**Origin:** Rhythmics / Dance

Starting with your head, roll your body down slowly, one vertebra at a time, toward the floor; your hands and neck are relaxed! Then, vertebra by vertebra, bring your torso back up again until you are in an upright position. (Relax your shoulders, don't pull them up to your ears!)





# 15. Calf pumping “Pushing away the wall”

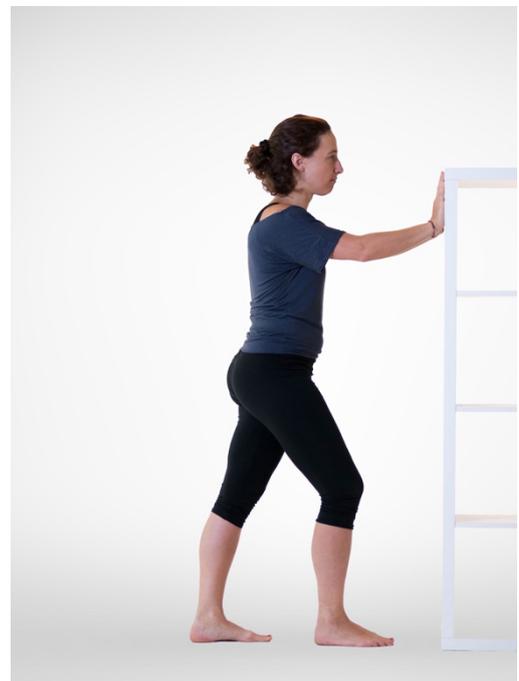
**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Concentrate, enhance attentiveness  
**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

Holding on to something for support, place one leg in front of the other and shift your weight to the front foot. The ball of your back foot is on the floor. Exhale, pressing your heel against the floor. The leg remains stretched. Inhale and raise your heel again. Exhale and press it to the floor.

Repeat this exercise several times before you switch to the other leg.

This exercise encourages our articulateness and improves our auditory perception (listening comprehension) as well as our attentiveness; it is ideally performed when fatigued, stressed or before starting difficult tasks.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*





# 16. Flower picker

**Age group :** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Activate and concentrate, remove blockages

**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

Stand relaxed, crossing your legs. When exhaling, let your upper torso bend forward, your arms hanging down loosely. Inhaling, rise again. Repeat, while you also bend over to your right and to your left.

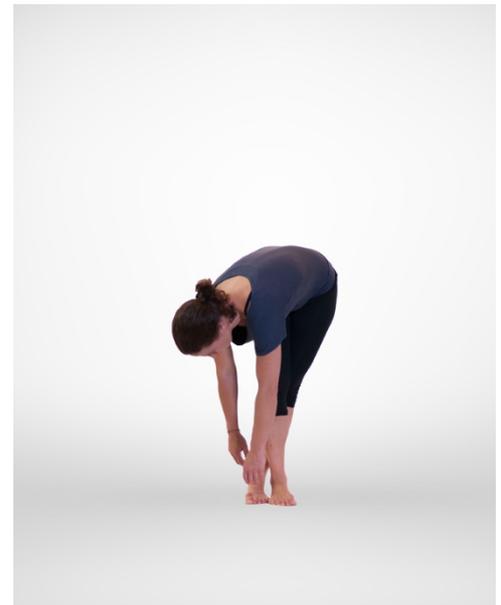
Repeat the exercise at least three times.

First, perform the exercise with your feet standing parallel (see Exercise 14 "Rolling down").

Focus your attention on your breathing and your dangling upper body.

This exercise requires patience and frees our mind. It also activates our memory.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*





# 17. Arm circling

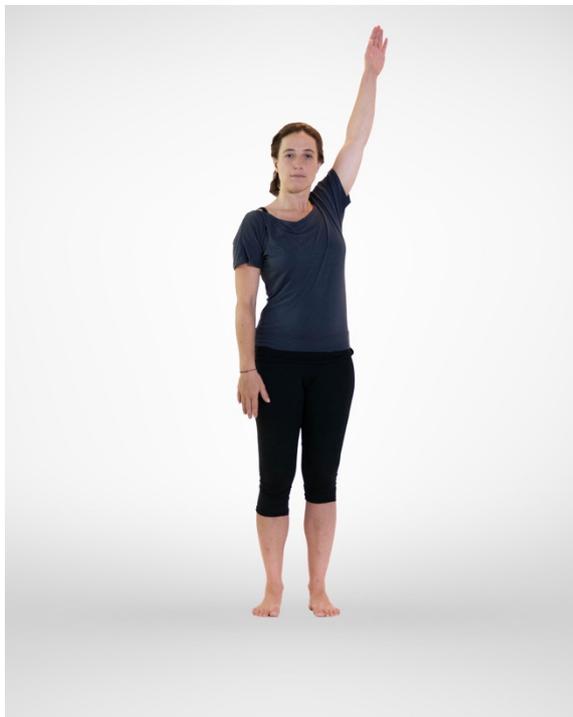
**Age group:** A1, A2

**Goal:** Activate the lung meridian, improve breathing

**Origin:** Rhythmics

Stand with your legs a shoulder's width apart on the floor. First, circle one arm backwards, then the other, and eventually both arms at the same time. The circular movement should be directed backward and not to the side. Your elbows should be fully extended.

Repeat this exercise 20 times.



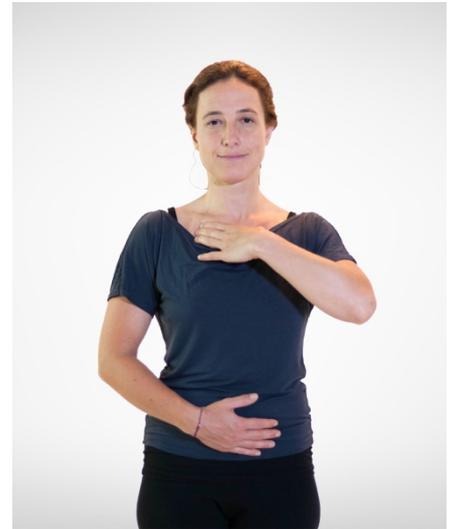


# 18. Brain buttons

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Activate, improve communication between left and right brain hemisphere  
**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

Put one hand on your navel, while with the other hand you massage the indentations below your collar bone on each side of the sternum. Remain in this position for at least half a minute.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*



# 19. Earth buttons

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Enhance concentration, stimulate energy flow  
**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

Place one hand on your navel. Rest the other hand under your lower lip. After having taken some deep breaths, change hands and continue the exercise, while moving your eyes from the ceiling to the floor and up again.

Holding our earth buttons activates one of the eight extraordinary meridians, the conception vessel (which begins at the perineum and runs along the body's midline up to the chin where it ends beneath the lower lip).

This exercise helps us ground and centre ourselves.

*Source: Silvia Meixner, Ernst Tumpold: "Kinder aufs Lernen vorbereiten"*





# 20. Energy yawn

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2  
**Goal:** Concentrate, relax brain  
**Origin:** Edu-Kinesthetics

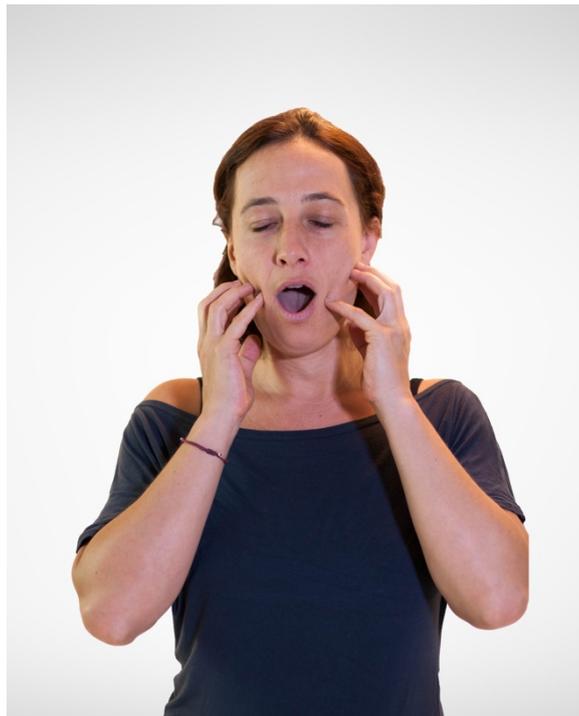
Let your jaw drop as if you had to yawn. While you massage the temporomandibular joint (TMJ, jaw joint), make a relaxed yawning sound.

This exercise should be repeated three to six times.

The exercise "energy yawn" is good for:

- relaxing the entire brain
- activating the reticular formation (part of the brain which extracts relevant information and suppresses distracting information).

Furthermore, the exercise helps us to improve self-expression, creativity and balance.





# 21. Ankle circles

**Age group:** B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Concentrate, loosen the ankles  
**Origin:** Tui Na

Sit on a chair with your right leg crossed over your left one and your ankles relaxed. Move your foot in a circular motion – clockwise as well as counter-clockwise: turn your foot outward, point it, turn it inward, flex it. Cross your legs and follow the movement of your ankles with your eyes. To be able to stand, jump and walk well, it is important that you feel your feet.

The ankle correlates with the spleen-pancreas functional cycle (which is essential for nourishing the muscles). For this exercise it is important that you focus on a slow and smooth circling motion.

Repeat this exercise a few times with both feet.

The exercise "ankle circles" activates the stomach meridian, loosen our ankles and can be used as preparation for the "cross-over exercises".





# 22. Neck exercise

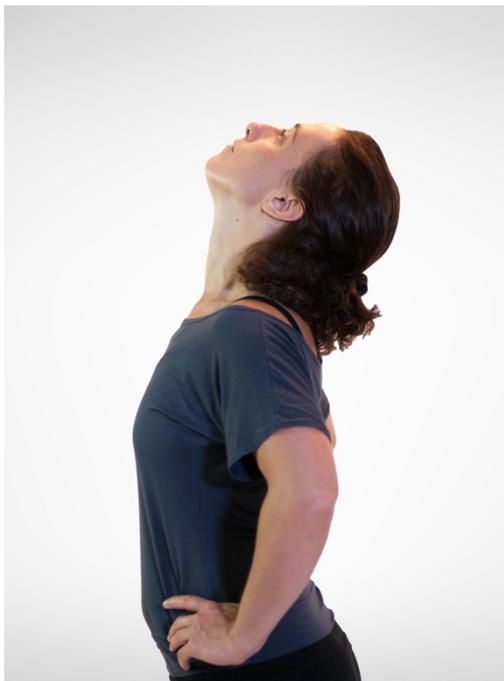
**Age group:** A2, B1, B2, C1  
**Goal:** Concentrate, relax neck muscles  
**Origin:** Tui Na

Standing upright, put your hands on your hips. Bend your head as far back as possible. While inhaling deeply, feel your throat muscles stretching. Exhaling, get back into your starting position. Then bend your head forward, mouth closed, until your chin touches your breast. Relax and breath in.

Repeat this exercise ten times.

This exercise helps us relax our neck and improves our breathing. It enhances our concentration, our cardiac cycle and attentiveness.

"You can best learn with a quiet and focused mind."





# 23. The golden rooster

**Age group:** A1, A2, B1, B2, C1

**Goal:** Enhance concentration, activate cardiac cycle

**Origin:** Tui Na

Stand with your feet apart, your left hand hanging down loosely next to your body. Your right hand is clenched into a fist with your thumb tucked inside. Your elbow is bent at 90 degrees. Bend your wrist down, just like a cock moving its head. Then you move your wrist up radially as far as possible.

It is important that you perform this exercise slowly and follow your hand with your eyes (hand-eye coordination).



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Videos: Mindfulness exercises and physical exercises to activate your  
brain and improve your concentration

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