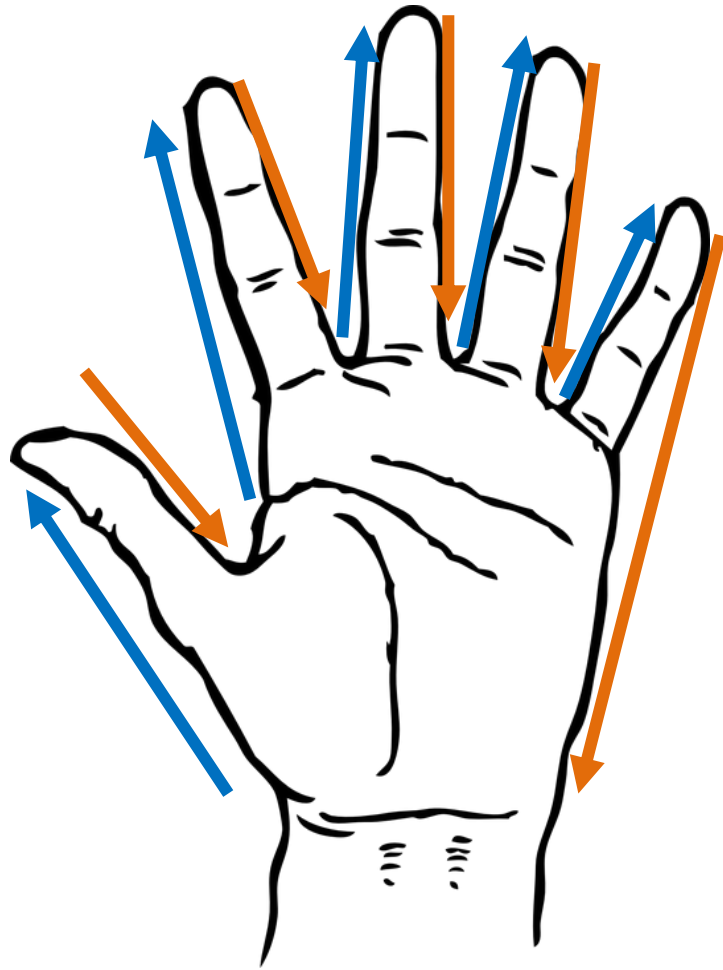


Finger Breathing

- Take the pointing finger on your right hand and run it up the side of your left thumb (follow the first blue arrow)
- As you follow the blue arrow going up breathe in slowly and deeply
- Then move your finger down the other side (the orange arrow) and breathe out slowly and deeply
- Keep running your finger up and down, breathing in as you travel 'up the mountain' (blue arrows) and out as you travel 'down the mountain' (orange arrows) until you are past the little finger. Try to make the out-breath longer than the in-breath.
- Swap hands and breathe slowly and deeply



Aims of the Finger Breathing activity:

- To develop self awareness
- To develop an understanding of the effects of stress on the body
- To connect bodily sensations with emotions
- To develop skills/strategies to manage stress
- To feel more in control

The Science bit.....

- Anxiety/stress results in quick, shallow breathing. If you can change the breathing pattern then you will feel less stressed and more in control.
- When the out-breath is longer than the in-breath it triggers the relaxation systems in the brain.
- focussing on the sensation of the finger running up and down, and the sensation of the breathing, occupies the working memory and helps to distract from the negative thoughts which increase the stress.