



Success

## Tip of the Month

~ # 3 ~

# Tools for Lowering STRESS

This first tool will be a simple one. You can suggest it any time your patient has mentioned a current stressful thing in her life, especially if she is speaking as if it is affecting her in the moment that she is talking to you.

Start by saying something like:

“Well, I often do a great little relaxation exercise when I am going about my day... I take **Three Deep Cleansing Breaths**.” And then demonstrate to her, by taking three breaths that are longer on the inhale than usual and longer on the exhale than usual. Ask her to breathe with you. You can count **1...2...3...** as you breathe, if that seems helpful. And by the second breath you are demonstrating, ask her (and show her) to **relax on the exhale** part of the breath.

In fact, try it right now as you are reading this. It will take no longer to read this and breathe mindfully than it will to just read it. And in your appointment, it will take about an extra two and a half minutes to demonstrate to her how to breathe in a way that supports her more fully and gives her (and you) a small break.

Breathing in this way gives the body a brief respite from the physiological build-up of stress in the body. It also shows your patient another way, a less cognitive and more body-centered way, in which you care about her health and the health of her baby.

Thank you again for all you do for your Sweet Success moms!