

THE BENEFITS OF COLORING FOR GYMNASTICS ATHLETES

Coloring isn't just for fun—it's a powerful regulation tool that can help gymnasts of all abilities prepare their bodies and minds for training. Whether an athlete needs help calming down, focusing, or building hand and grip strength, coloring is a great way to support emotional and physical well-being.

Regulation & Emotional Control

- Coloring helps calm the nervous system, making it a great pre-class or cool-down activity.
- It provides structured movement for the hands, helping athletes transition from high-energy to focused attention.
- Engaging in coloring can reduce anxiety, frustration, or sensory overload, helping athletes feel more in control.

Fine Motor Strength & Coordination


- Holding crayons, colored pencils, or markers strengthens finger grip and hand muscles needed for skills like gripping bars, rings, or beam.
- Enhances hand-eye coordination, which is crucial for skill development in gymnastics.
- Supports spatial awareness and bilateral coordination, both essential for body control in movement.

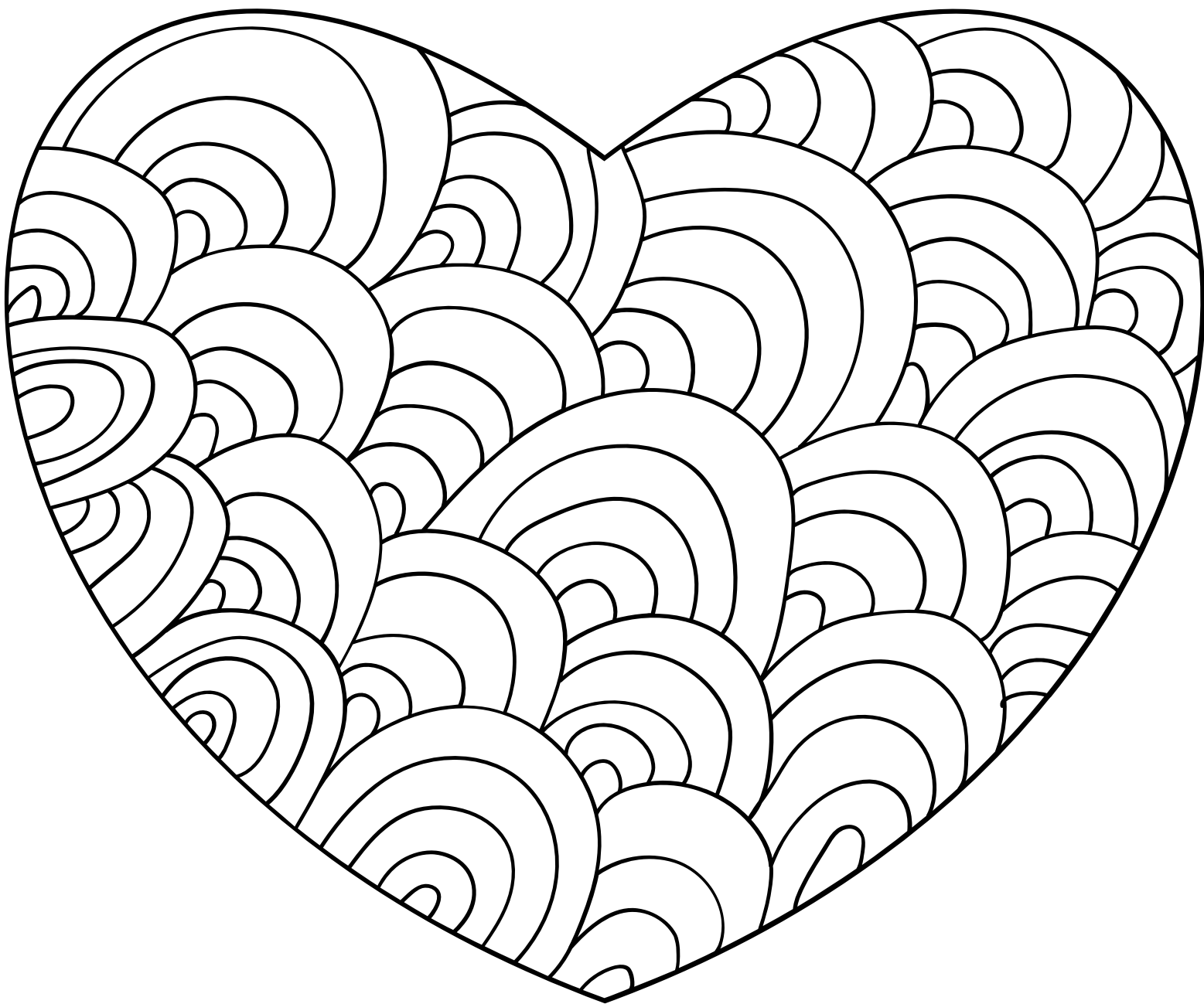
Focus & Attention

- Coloring helps athletes practice staying in one place while engaging in a purposeful activity.
- It promotes visual tracking skills needed for executing trampoline, vault, tumbling, and double-mini skills & routines.
- Encourages self-directed play and independence, skills that are beneficial in gymnastics training.

Sensory Processing & Emotional Expression

- Choosing colors and creating designs can help express emotions nonverbally, which is useful for non-speaking or minimally speaking athletes.
- The repetitive motion of coloring can be soothing and grounding, helping neurodivergent athletes regulate.
- Different textures (crayons, markers, watercolor pencils) can offer tactile feedback that some athletes find calming.

 **TRY IT:** Use these coloring sheets and offer a few minutes of coloring before warm-up, during breaks, or as a way to wind down at the end of practice or during your gymnast's day. It can be a powerful tool to help gymnasts prepare, focus, and regulate so they can perform at their best!



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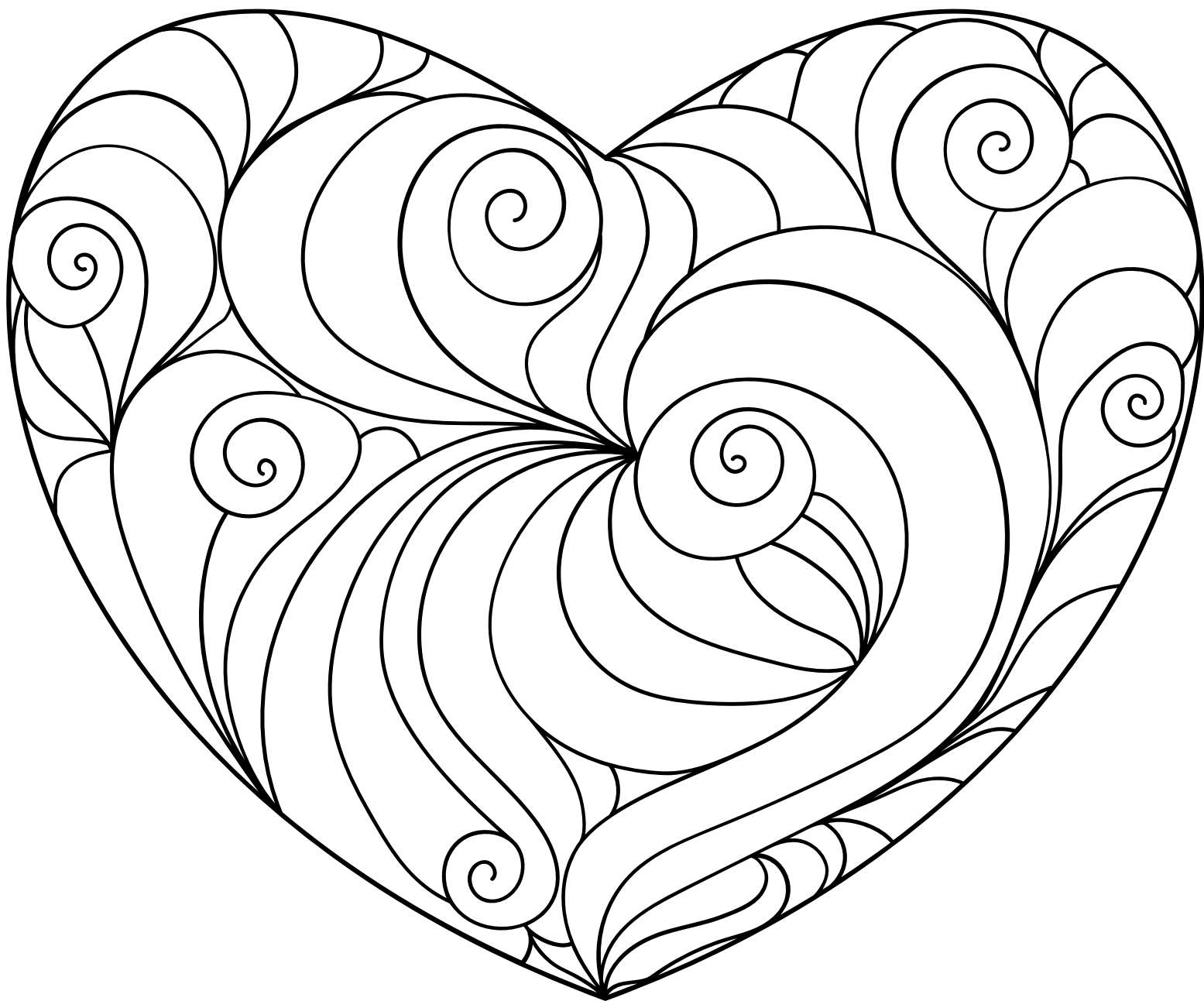
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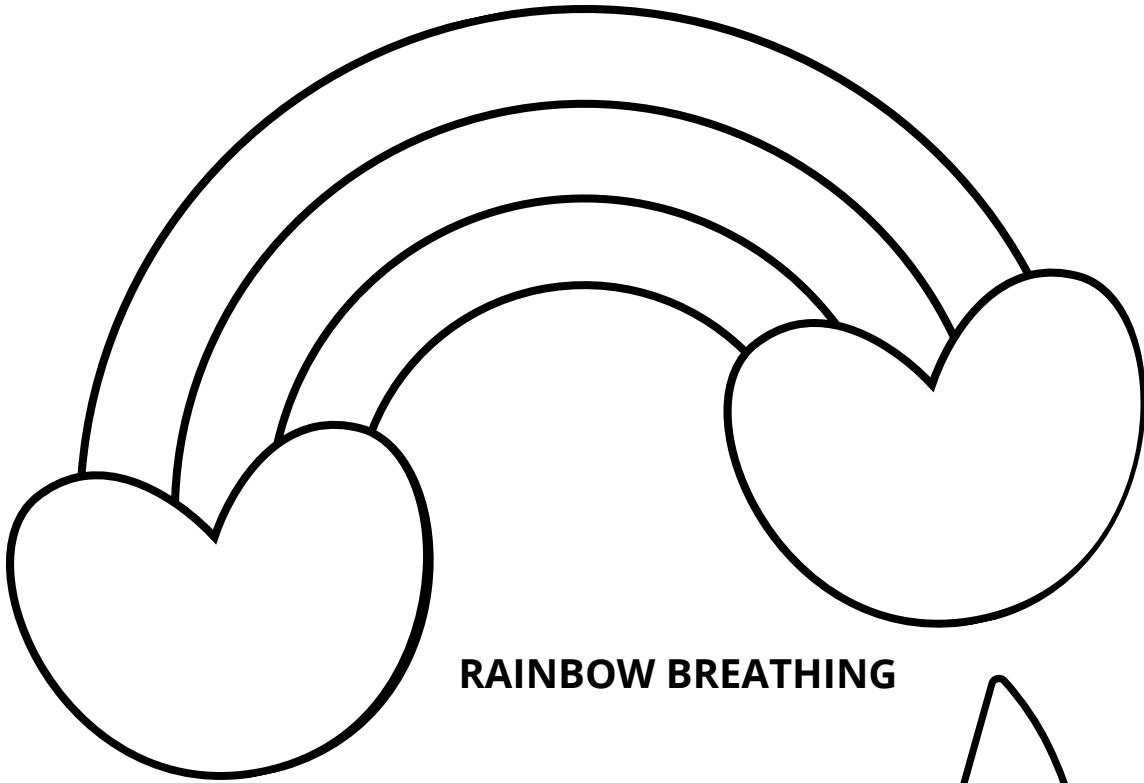
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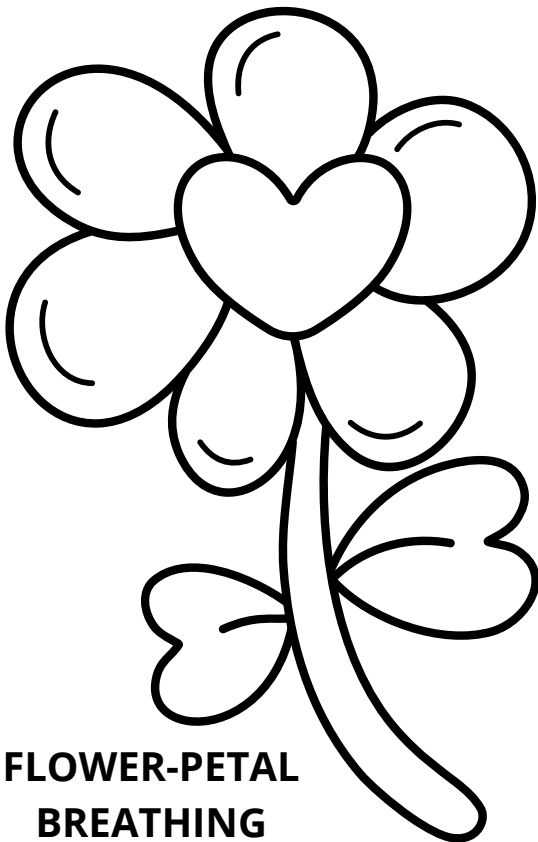
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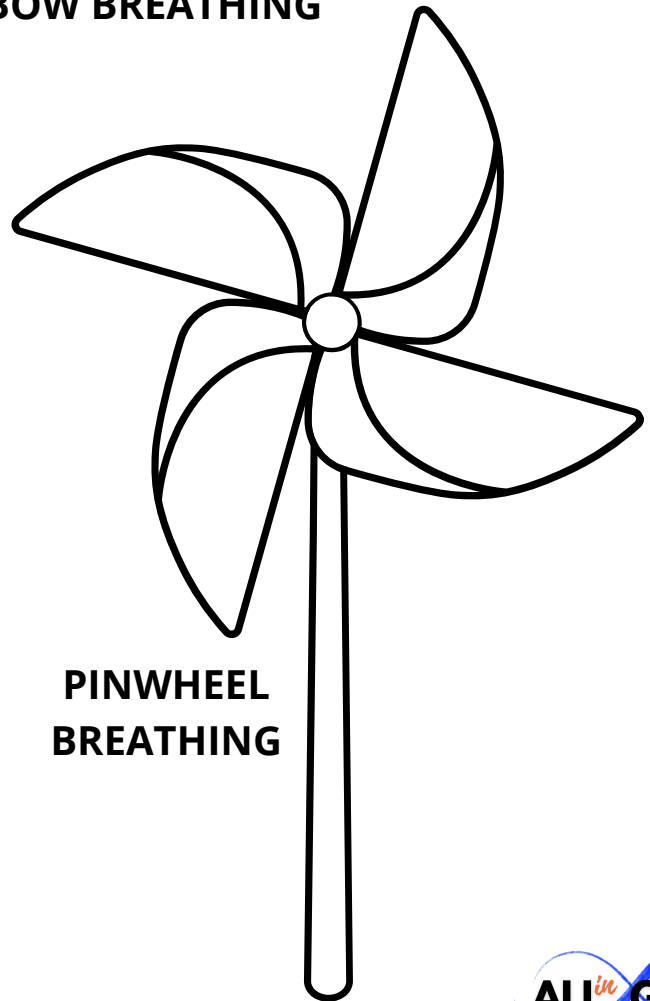
VALENTINE'S DAY BREATHS



RAINBOW BREATHING



FLOWER-PETAL
BREATHING



PINWHEEL
BREATHING

THE POWER OF BREATH: BUILDING A DAILY PRACTICE FOR EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Breathing is one of the **most powerful tools** for regulation, focus, and emotional control. When practiced **consistently**, breathing exercises become **easily accessible** in moments of stress, dysregulation, or sensory overload.

Just like learning a gymnastics skill, **breath regulation must be practiced when calm** so that when dysregulation occurs, the **body already knows what to do**.

Daily breath-work helps athletes:

- ✓ **Regulate energy levels** before, during, and after gymnastics practice
- ✓ **Improve focus and body awareness** for skill development
- ✓ **Manage stress** and build emotional resilience
- ✓ **Support sensory processing** and self-regulation

Try These Breathing Techniques

● Rainbow Breathing

How to Do It: Imagine drawing a rainbow in the air with your breath.

1. Start on one side, inhale deeply as you “trace” the arc of a rainbow up.
2. Exhale slowly as you “trace” down the other side.
3. Repeat 3-5 times, imagining a different color for each breath.

● Flower-Petal Breathing

How to Do It: This calming breath mimics the gentle opening and closing of flower petals.

1. Inhale deeply as you spread your fingers wide like a blooming flower.
2. Exhale slowly as you close your fingers together, like a petal folding in.
3. Repeat 3-5 times, focusing on slow, controlled movements.

● Pinwheel Breathing

How to Do It: Pretend you’re blowing on a pinwheel to make it spin!

1. Take a deep inhale through your nose.
2. Slowly blow out through your mouth, as if making a pinwheel spin gently.
3. Try different speeds—long, slow exhales for calming or short, strong exhales for energizing.
4. Repeat 3-5 times, focusing on long, smooth exhales for regulation.

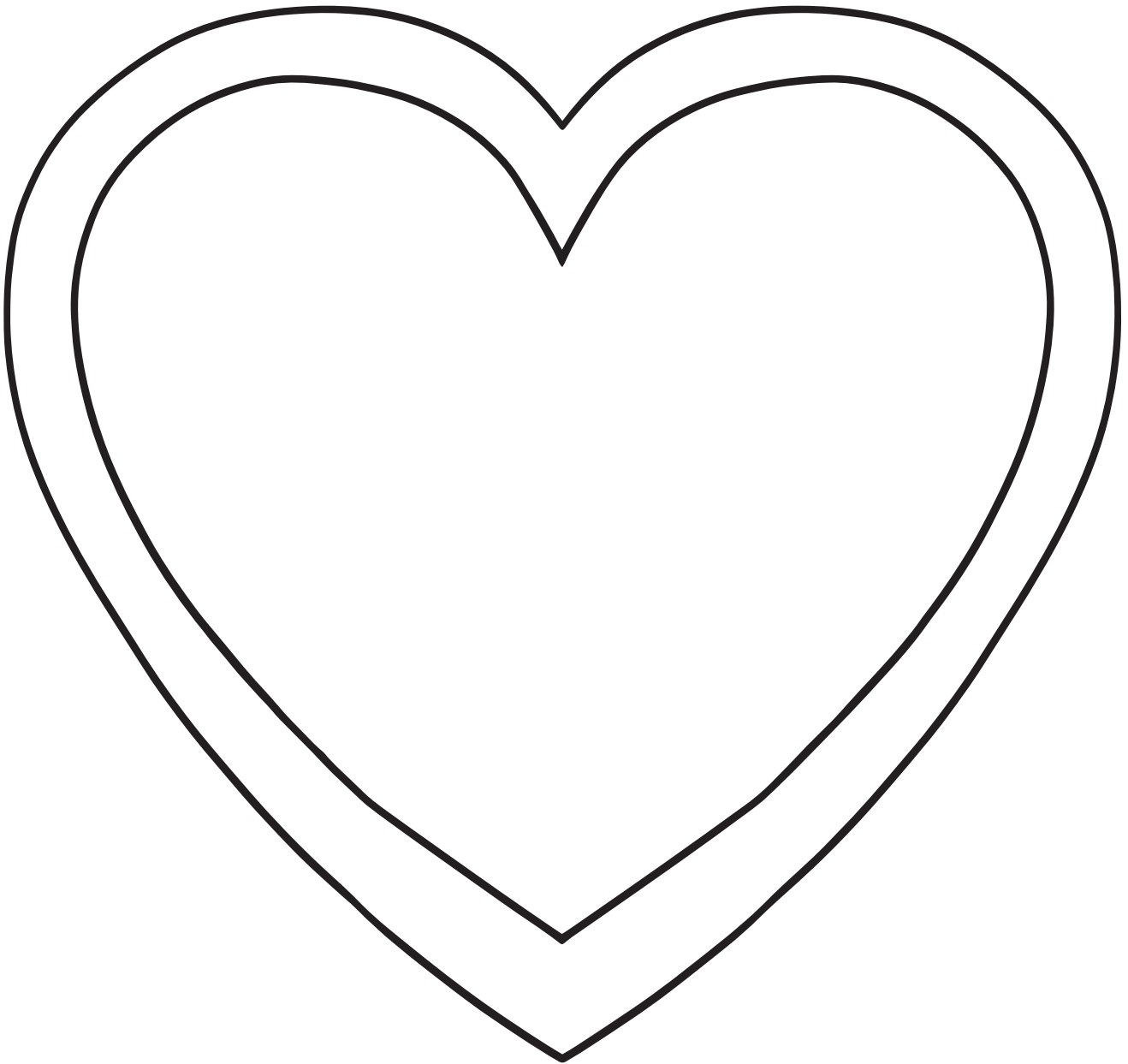
☀ **Breathe Together!**

Parents, **model and participate** in these breathing exercises with your child. Practicing together makes it feel natural and fun—so when regulation is needed, your athlete already has the tools in place to reset, refocus, and thrive!



FINISH THIS SENTENCE AND SHARE IT WITH A TEAMMATE:

"I feel strongest when I tell myself _____."



**LET'S SPREAD CONFIDENCE AND KINDNESS IN
OUR GYM COMMUNITY! ❤️**

THE POWER OF AFFIRMATIONS FOR GYMNASTS

Affirmations are **positive statements** that help athletes **build confidence, stay motivated, and develop a strong mindset**. Just like practicing a skill over and over makes it feel more natural, **practicing positive thoughts** helps athletes believe in their abilities and overcome challenges.

Gymnastics requires mental toughness as much as physical strength.

Writing and repeating affirmations can:

- ✓ Boost self-confidence
- ✓ Help athletes recognize their fear & frustration and reframe it
- ✓ Reinforce a growth mindset—progress takes time and effort
- ✓ Create a habit of self-kindness instead of self-criticism

Try These Gymnastics Affirmations!

💪 Strength & Confidence

- “I am strong, powerful, and capable.”
- “I trust my body and my training.”
- “Every turn makes me better.”

☀️ Growth Mindset

- “I learn from mistakes.”
- “Progress is progress, no matter how small.”
- “I give my best effort, and that is enough.”

❤️ Resilience & Determination

- “Challenges help me grow.”
- “I am brave, even when things feel hard.”
- “I keep going because I believe in myself.”
- “I can do hard things.”

🎯 Focus & Calm

- “I take a deep breath and trust myself.”
- “I am in control of my thoughts and actions.”
- “I am focused, prepared, and ready.”

💌 Share the Love! 💌

Let's spread confidence and kindness in our gym community! ❤️

