

BREATHING EXERCISES

Box Breathing or 4 x 4 Breathing

Sit straight up in a comfortable chair; put your feet flat on the floor. This is simple breathing exercise you can do anytime you feel stressed.

When you slow your breathing and soften your muscles, it communicates to your brain you have nothing to worry about. Next, relax your hands in your lap.

Close your eyes or find an object to focus on in the room (If at home, a favourite object).

Close your mouth and breathe in slowly through you nose, counting to 4 as you Inhale.

Hold for 4.

Slowly exhale with your mouth counting to 4. Repeat 4 x.

The key is to make sure that your out breath is as long or longer than your in breath. As you continue this pattern of slow and deep breathing notice any places

In your body you are holding tension and Imagine your muscles are softening with each breathe.

Repeat 4x4 breathing.

Finally, you can choose a colour you associate with peace and safety and imagine its mist In the room that you can breathe in. Repeat 4 x4 breathing.

Square Breathing

1. Breathe in for 4 seconds,
2. Hold it in for 4 seconds.
3. Breathe out for 4 seconds,
4. Repeat this 4 times.

Alternate Nostril Breathing

How it's done: This breathing technique brings calm, balance and unites the right and left sides of the brain.

Starting in a comfortable position, close your eyes and hold the right thumb over the right nostril and inhale deeply through the left nostril. At the peak of inhalation, close off the left nostril with the index finger, and then exhale through the right nostril. Continue the pattern, inhaling through the right nostril closing it off with the right thumb, and exhaling through the left nostril.

Practice at least 10 minutes per day.

When it works best: Crunch time, or whenever it's time to focus or energize. Just don't try this one before bedtime. This breathing technique is said to "clear the channels "and make people feel more awake, its' almost like having a cup of coffee.



5-Count Energizing Breathing

This exercise is especially useful when you are dealing with hectic or upsetting situations from which you can only take a short break-for example, at work or a social function.

Inhale quickly to a count of 5.

Exhale by huffing your breath out in short bursts to the count of 5.

(Out-bursts: huh-huh-huh-huh-huh)

4-7-8 Breathing

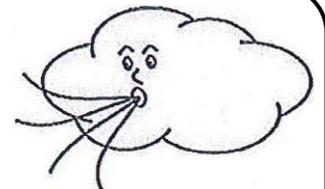
Put one hand on your belly and the other on your chest.

Take a deep, slow breath from your belly, and silently count to 4 as you breathe in through your nose. Hold your breath, and silently count from 1 to 7.

Breathe out through your mouth completely as you silently count from 1 to 8 on the out breath.

Try to get all of the air out of your lungs by the time you count to 8.

Repeat 3 to 7 times, or until you feel calm.



DEEP BREATHING EXERCISE

Deep breathing is a good relaxation technique because it is fairly easy to learn and it is adaptable, meaning it can be done anywhere.

How to deep breathe:

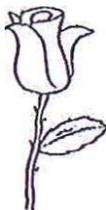
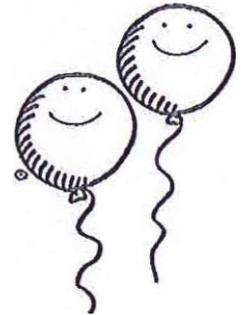
- a) Place one hand over your chest and one on your stomach and breathe normally. Which hand seems to be moving in and out more as you breathe?
- b) When your chest moves, you are taking a shallow breath-you are not using all of your lungs. When your stomach moves, you are taking a deep breath -you are using your diaphragm to fill all of your lungs. When relaxing, we want to aim for deep breaths that move the stomach.
- c) Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. When breathing out, you should do it slowly.

Mindful Breathing Script

The primary goal of mindful breathing is simply a calm, non-judging awareness, allowing thoughts and feelings to come and go without getting caught up in them.

When practicing this exercise, try and imagine that when you are breathing in, you are smelling a rose. When you are breathing out, you are flickering a candle or cooling down a hot spoon full of soup.

- Sit comfortably, with your eyes closed and your spine reasonably straight.
- Start by exhaling, then breathe in, ... breathe out, ... breathe in, ...and breathe out.
- Bring your attention to your breathing.
- Imagine that you have a balloon in your tummy.
 - Every time you breathe in, the balloon inflates.
 - Each time you breathe out, the balloon deflates.
 - Notice the sensations in your abdomen as the balloon inflates and deflates.
 - Your abdomen rising with the in-breath, and falling with the out-breath.
- Thoughts will come into your mind, and that's okay, because that's just what the human mind does!
- Simply notice those thoughts, and then bring your attention back to your breathing.
- Breathe in,breathe out,breathe in,.... and breathe out.
- Likewise, you can notice sounds, physical feelings, and emotions, and again, just bring your attention back to your breathing.
- You don't have to follow those thoughts or feelings; don't judge yourself for having them, or analyze them in any way. It's okay for these thoughts to be there. Just notice those thoughts, and let them drift on by, bringing your attention back to your breathing.
- Whenever you notice that your attention has drifted off and is becoming caught up in thoughts or feelings, simply note that the attention has drifted, and then gently bring the attention back to your breathing.
- Breathe in,breathe out,breathe in,.... and breathe out.
- It's okay and natural for thoughts to enter into your awareness, and for your attention to follow them.
- No matter how many times this happens, just keep bringing your attention back to your breathing.



Breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, and breathe out.
You can repeat this for as long as you're comfortable.
When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

