

Breathing Exercises



Regular Breathing

Breathing is an automatic function of the brain and body. When you feel anxious or under stress your body will change your breathing pattern.

➔ Here is an exercise to observe your breathing:

- 1) Start by sitting or lying in a comfortable position.
- 2) Bring your focus to your breathing, do not try to change or control you breathing.
- 3) When you are feeling relaxed, bring your awareness to the flow of air into the body through the nostrils.
- 4) As your awareness of the air through the nostrils becomes comfortable and relaxed, move your awareness to your throat.
- 5) As your awareness becomes relaxed and comfortable, move your focus to your chest.
 - Remember you are not changing anything about your breathing, simply observing it.
- 6) Move your awareness to your stomach, feeling the expansion and release of your lungs.
- 7) End this exercise by opening your awareness to the entire breathing process – air entering through the nostrils, through the throat, filling the lungs, movement of the chest and stomach, and the air then leaving in the reverse – from the stomach and chest, through the lungs, throat and nostrils.

Breathing Exercises

Deep Breathing

There are a number benefits to deep breathing. It relaxes the body and mind, improves blood flow, is natural painkiller and increases energy.

➡ Here is an exercise for deep breathing:

Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Place one hand on your chest and the other on you stomach just below your rib cage. As you breathe in, the hand on your stomach moves with the expansion of your lungs. Little to no movement should be noted with your hand on your chest.

- The goal is to move your breath from the upper chest to your lower stomach.

When deep breathing, breathe in slowly through the nose and hold when you feel full. Then breathe out slowly through pursed lips and hold when you feel empty. Repeat.

Practice deep breathing for 3-8 minutes about 3-4 times a day. Over time as you become used to this type of breathing, less effort is needed, you can gradually increase how long you do it for.

- As you begin to practice deep breathing, keep in mind taking in really deep breaths or too many breaths can cause you to feel lightheaded. If this happens, resume your normal rate of breathing and this sensation will pass.



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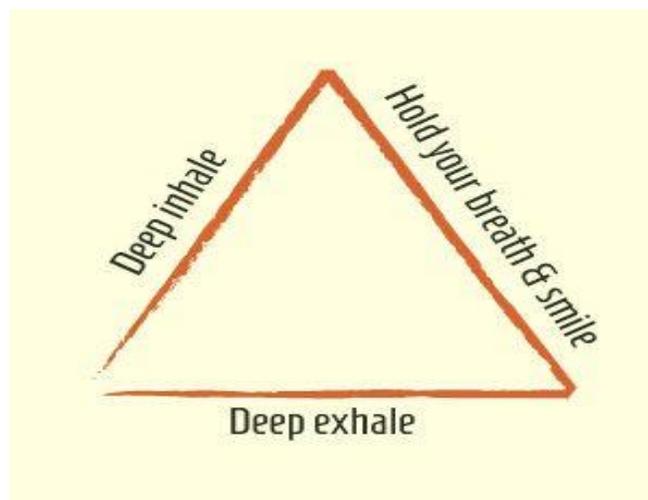
4-7-8 Method

There are benefits to practicing different breathing techniques: exercising your lungs can quiet the mind, help reduce anxiety and improve sleep.

With movement disorders, poor sleep is common. Sometimes it is challenging to sleep if your thoughts are racing.

➡ Here is a breathing technique to help quiet the mind and can help getting to sleep.

- 1) Settle into a comfortable position, breathe out completely.
 - 2) Breathe in through your nose, to the count of **4**.
 - 3) Hold your breath for **7** seconds.
 - 4) Breathe out through your mouth making a whoosh sound, to the count of **8**.
- Repeat 3-4 times



For some, this technique might be challenging. A modified version of this breathing technique is the triangle or **3-3-3** method.

- 1) In a comfortable position, breathe out completely.
 - 2) Breathe in through the nose to the count of 3.
 - 3) Hold your breath for 3 seconds.
 - 4) Breathe out through your mouth to the count of 3.
- Repeat 3-4 times

Breathing Exercises



Mindful Breathing

This exercise can be done standing up or sitting down, anytime or anywhere.

➔ Be still and focus on your breath for about 1 minute.

- 1) Start by slowly breathing in and out. (The breath cycle takes about 6 seconds, in through the nose and out through the mouth.)
 - 2) As you let your breath flow effortlessly in and out, let go of your thoughts.
 - 3) While staying aware of your breath, allow your thoughts to come and go freely.
 - 4) Notice when you find your thought have left your breath and are on other tasks or worries. Gently bring your thoughts back to your breath.
 - 5) Be purposeful in focusing on being aware of your breath entering through your nose and moving to fill your lungs.
 - 6) Keep your awareness as your breath leaves your body through your mouth, taking with it any stress, worry or anxiety.
- If you found 1 minute of this exercise beneficial, try increasing to 2 or 3 minutes?

Breathing Exercises

Box Breathing

- 1) Close your eyes and slowly breath in through your nose for 4 seconds while feeling the air fill your lungs.
- 2) Hold your breath for a count of 4 seconds.
- 3) Begin to slowly exhale for 4 seconds, emptying out the air from your lungs.
- 4) Hold for a count of 4 seconds.

Repeat the cycle (steps 1-4).

Practice for 2 minutes at a time, 4-5 times per day. Practice while in a relaxed state to gain box breathing “muscle memory”. Then try practicing it when you have symptoms or when you feel anxious.

