

Breathing Techniques for Stress Relief



Take 5 Breathing Technique:

1. Spread your hand and stretch your fingers out like a star.
2. Breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth. Remember to keep it slow and steady.
3. Place your pointer finger at the bottom of your thumb, and breathe in as you slide up.
4. Breathe out as you slide down.
5. Breathe in as you slide up your second finger, and breathe out as you slide down.
6. Keep going until you have finished tracing your fingers and you have taken five slow breaths.

Purse-lips Breathing:

1. Breathe in through your nose (as if you are smelling something) for about 4 seconds.
2. Count, 1, 2, 3, 4.
3. Pucker your lips like you're getting ready to blow out candles on a birthday cake.
4. Breathe out very slowly through pursed-lips, two to three times as long as you breathed in.
5. Count 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9...
6. Repeat 2-3 times.

Diaphragmatic Breathing:

1. Try this while sitting first.
2. Place one hand on your abdomen.
3. Place one hand on your upper chest.
4. Focus your breathing on your abdomen.

5. As you breathe out, the hand on your abdomen should lower.
6. As you breathe in, the hand on your abdomen should rise.
7. Breathe in through the nose.
8. Breathe out slowly through pursed lips.
9. Practice this 2 to 3 times a day for 5 to 10 minutes.
10. Then try it while standing.
11. Finally, try it while doing an activity.

Alternate Nostril Breathing:

1. Take a comfortable and tall seat, making sure your spine is straight and your heart is open.
2. Relax your left palm comfortably into your lap and bring your right hand just in front of your face.
3. With your right hand, bring your pointer finger and middle finger to rest between your eyebrows, lightly using them as an anchor. The fingers we'll be actively using are the thumb and ring finger.
4. Close your eyes and take a deep breath in and out through your nose.
5. Close your right nostril with your right thumb.
6. Inhale through the left nostril slowly and steadily.
7. Close the left nostril with your ring finger so both nostrils are held closed; retain your breath at the top of the inhale for a brief pause.

8. Open your right nostril and release the breath slowly through the right side; pause briefly at the bottom of the exhale.
9. Inhale through the right side slowly.
10. Hold both nostrils closed (with ring finger and thumb).
11. Open your left nostril and release breath slowly through the left side. Pause briefly at the bottom.
12. Repeat 5-10 cycles, allowing your mind to follow your inhales and exhales.

4-7-8 Breathing:

1. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
2. Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four.
3. Count, 1, 2, 3, 4.
4. Hold your breath for a count of seven.
5. Count, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
6. Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of eight.
7. Count, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.
8. This is one breath.
9. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.