

breathing exercises



The following is a series of breathing exercises that are used as a technique to activate the relaxation response. When your body is relaxed, you are not only more relaxed, but also more naturally energized and productive.

Technique 1. Sit quietly in a straight-backed chair to allow for better posture and deeper breaths:

- Close your eyes.
- Breathe naturally and begin to notice your breathing.
- Do this for a few minutes.
- Breathe deeply and slowly from your abdomen to the count of five.
- Hold your breath to the count of seven.
- Breathe out slowly to the count of nine.
- Continue with this breathing exercise for another five minutes.

Technique 2. Sit quietly on the floor or in a chair:

- Close your eyes.
- Place your palms on your abdomen.
- Allow your abdomen to extend as you inhale slowly to the count of five.
- Hold your breath to the count of seven.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth to the count of nine or more.
- Repeat for a five minute breathing session.

Technique 3. Stand or sit as this is an “energizing” breathing exercise:

- Breathe in deeply
- Exhale forcefully through your nose. You will notice that your abdomen gives a little “kick.”
- Breathe and exhale through your nose in short bursts, similar to panting of a dog.
- Continue this for three rounds. Count from forty to eighty breaths per round.
- Your abdomen will get a workout and you will wake up your brain and body.

Technique 4. Lie down on your back with your arms slightly extended at your sides and legs slightly spread apart:

- Breathe in and hold your breath while you tighten your arms and hands. Hold for 10 seconds. Relax as you exhale.
- Breathe in and hold your breath as you tighten your legs and feet. Hold. Relax as you exhale.
- Breathe in and hold your breath as you tighten your abdomen. Hold. Relax as you exhale.
- Breathe in and hold your breath as you tighten your buttocks. Hold. Relax as you exhale.
- Breathe in and hold your breath as you tighten your face. Hold. Relax and exhale.
- Breathe in and hold your breath as you tighten your entire body. Hold. Relax and exhale.
- Completely relax your entire body and let your mind let go of any tension. Lie in this state completely relaxed for ten minutes.

ACTION PLAN: HOW CAN YOU INCORPORATE THIS INTO YOUR DAY?
