

Simple Breathing Technique

The Breath

The word for breath and spirit in many languages are the same; Sanskrit - prana, Greek - pneuma, Hebrew - ruach, Latin - spiritus. (Wikipedia 2010)

The most immediate and effective relaxation technique is conscious regulation of one's breath. Breathing is the connection between mind and body, and the union between consciousness - awareness and unconsciousness. Breath is the movement of spirit or consciousness in matter. It provides a functional key element to health and wellness, breathing can be controlled by the voluntary nervous system or the autonomic nervous system associated with the fight or flight stress response.

It's interesting to note that breathing is the only function that one can perform both consciously - voluntary as well as unconsciously - involuntary.

"Fast paced lifestyles, a continuous barrage of media stimuli, pollution, and genetically engineered food, lack of sleep; bad posture and high-speed technology have created an environment where the average person doesn't breathe properly or understand the nourishing, health-giving properties of the breath. The fundamentals of all meditation techniques are based on three principles **breath**, concentration and intent." ~ Dr. Wendy Dearborne. *The Application of Meditation For Stress Reduction & Improved Health* (2010:47-48)

So, let's look at a simple breathing technique that by design is a gateway for you to establish both physical and mental calmness. When employed, this type of breathing technique slows down your riotous mental chatter and allows for conscious mental direction. This is achieved by holding your intention that you will relax, and as a result, you automatically connect with your center-point. The wonderful thing about this is when you relax your mind; your body has to follow. This simple breathing technique that can take 1-5 minutes can be use anytime or anywhere.

SIMPLE BREATHING TECHNIQUE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose a time when you won't be disturbed.
2. Turn off your phone, TV, PC, Mac, Pad etc.
3. Set a timer.
4. Choose to sit somewhere comfortably.
5. Be relaxed in your posture, yet sit still and hold yourself tall and erect.
6. Close your eyes and or lock your gaze onto one object.
7. Being breathing through your nose. And exhale through your nose or mouth.

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THEN

8. Inhale for a count of 4, hold the breath for a count of 1; then exhale gently, to the count of 6. Finish by holding the lungs empty for the count of 1.

9. Repeat the breathing cycle rhythmically, ensuring your breathing remains even and smooth.

Additional Information If the 4-6 count feels too long, then try inhaling for the count of 2; hold for 1; exhale to the count of 4. If 4-6 is too short then try increasing the breath lengths to 6 in and 8 out, and so on.

Note: Whether you choose short or long breaths, the most important thing is that your exhalation is longer than your inhalation. This will allow the air at the base of your lung to be expelled and the body to relax. Also, if the shorter or longer breaths create anxiety or breathlessness and or lightheadedness, make adjustments by taking a short or longer inhalation. Make sure that both inhalation and exhalation are smooth and relaxed, you're not running a race.

“the most important thing is that your exhalation is longer than your inhalation and they are both smooth.”