

Breathing Techniques

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Everyone could use a 5- minute stress buster a few times a day, whether at home, work, school, or on your lunch break. When was the last time you allowed your mind and body to relax at the same time intentionally? Most of us run on automatic pilot and it's difficult in today's world to slow down and take a few moments for ourselves.

Being purposefully aware of our breathing can help us tune into our body, calming mind, body, and soul. Using a technique called DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING; we can cultivate an adaptive response to stress or anxiety. Babies come into the world breathing this way, but somehow we adults have forgotten how to breathe deeply and when faced with stress can feel uncentered. Diaphragmatic breathing is abdominal or belly breathing. The point is to relax your belly as much as possible so that the full cycle of breathing will be slower and deeper.

Some people may hyperventilate when they become extremely anxious and will notice their breathing may become faster and shallower. When this happens they are not breathing in enough oxygen and are breathing out too much carbon dioxide. This is very common with people who suffer from PANIC DISORDER. Often, people with high anxiety or panic may believe they are going to have a heart attack, pass out, or sometimes even believe they may die.

Sometimes initially focusing on one's breathing may increase anxiety, but practicing can create confidence that we can re-focus ourselves . DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING is an effective tool to reestablish inner harmony and balance. At any time during the day, one can surreptitiously do a quiet "breathe in, breath out" exercise without anyone around you knowing what you're doing. Perhaps you're in a meeting and a boss or co-worker gets on your nerves. What do you do? That's right, breath in, breath out. This is a great way to emotionally collect yourself when you're angry, upset, vulnerable, or out of sorts. Tuning into yourself this way allows one to stay in the present and to orient yourself to what emotions you are feeling.