

Deep Breathing Exercises

Research shows that deep breathing exercises can help reduce stress in our lives. Deep breathing is very easy to learn and can be used at any time. The next time you are feeling anxious try this simple relaxation method. You can do this breathing as often as you need to.

DEEP BREATHING STEPS

1. Close your eyes
2. Breathe in through your nose
3. Slow your breathing down
4. Breathe from your belly
5. Keep your breathing smooth and steady
6. Breathe in slowly while counting to four
7. Pause
8. Breathe out slowly while counting to four
9. Repeat steps 6 through 8 for five minutes or until you start to feel better

TIPS FOR DEEP BREATHING

- It can take sometime to learn deep breathing. Take time to practice each day. The more you practice, the easier it will be.
- It is usually better to practice several shorter periods of deep breathing rather than one long episode of deep breathing. Practicing more often helps you make deep breathing a habit in your lifestyle.
- Deep breathing can be done anywhere.
- If you are having trouble taking deep breathes, try breathing in through your nose and breathing out through your mouth.
- In time and with practice you will get an idea about how long you need to practice deep breathing exercises to reduce stress. Early on it may be helpful to set a particular time limit, for example, three minutes if you are pressed for time.
- If you feel like you cannot focus or have outside distractions, focus on counting as you breathe in and out. This will force you to focus on your breathing with less outside distractions.
- Keep trying. Deep breathing takes practice and can feel very different if you are not used to breathing this way. Practice it for a week or so before deciding that this is not for you.