



# Science of Breathing

"Practicing regular, mindful breathing can be calming and energizing and can even help with stress-related health problems ranging from panic attacks to digestive disorders."

~ Andrew Weil, M.D.

## Exercise 1: The Stimulating Breath (Energizing)

- Inhale and exhale rapidly through nose, keeping mouth closed and relaxed. Breaths in and out are equal in duration, and as short as possible. This is noisy.
- Try for three in-and-out breath cycles per second. This produces quick movements of the diaphragm. Breathe normally after each cycle.
- First try is only for 15 seconds. Each time, increase by five seconds or so, until reaching a full minute.

## Exercise 2: The 4-7-8 Breath (Relaxing)

- Sit, stand, or lay in straight comfortable position.
- Place tip of tongue on tissue just behind upper front teeth for entire exercise.
- Exhale completely through mouth, making a whoosh sound.
- Close mouth and inhale quietly through nose to a mental count of **four**.
- Hold breath for a count of **seven**.
- Exhale completely through mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **eight**.
- This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.
- Practicing daily and use it to help fall asleep.

## Exercise 3: Breath Counting (Meditation)

- Sit, stand, or lay in straight comfortable position.
- Gently close eyes and take a few deep breaths.
- To begin, count "one" to yourself as you exhale.
- The next time you exhale, count "two," and so on up to "five."
- Then begin a new cycle, counting "one" on the next exhalation.
- Let the breath come naturally without trying to influence it.
- Count only to "five," and when you exhale. Attention has wandered when you find yourself counting higher than "five". Try 10 minutes.

**For more:**

<http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/ART00521/three-breathing-exercises.html>

<http://www.wholepersonhealing.org/>