



The Police Treatment Centres

A charity providing treatment, support & recuperation for injured and ill police family members

Simple Breathing Techniques

Paying attention to your breathing is one of the most fundamental ways to relieve anxiety and tension. Here are a couple of simple ways to improve your breathing within the next few minutes.

Diaphragmatic Breathing

Put one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest, and see which one rises when you breathe in...

If it is your chest that is rising, it means you are breathing too shallowly (most of us do).

This type of breathing may contribute to increase in anxiety and tension.

The “Deep Breathing” we often hear about, contrary to popular belief doesn’t actually mean taking in vast quantities of air. It refers to breathing deeply into your diaphragm, a dome-shaped muscle which expands making your stomach rise when you breathe into it.

Imagine that you have a bowl in your stomach that you are trying to fill in with air – see that stream of clean fresh air going all the way down into your stomach to fill the “bowl”.

7/11 Breathing

This is Martial Arts approach, where the out-breath is made longer than the in-breath, i.e. breathing in to the count of 7 and breathing out to the count of 11.

This can be challenging to achieve straight away, so start with smaller counts: say, breathe in to the count of 4 and breathe out to the count of 6, increasing the count as you get more practice. Repeat a number of times.

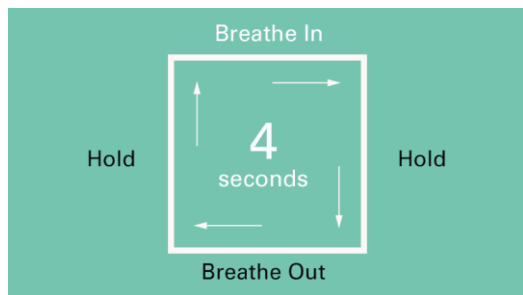
Square Breathing

To do the so-called “square-breathing”:

- 1) Breathe in as you count to 4
- 2) Hold your breath to the count of 4
- 3) Breathe out to the count of 4
- 4) Count to 4 before breathing in again

It can be helpful to rest your eyes on each side of a square for the steps 1 – 4 as you perform this exercise. Repeat a number of times.

NOTE: If you suffer from asthma or other breathing difficulties, please consult with your doctor before undertaking any breathing exercises.





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Relax and Count

Sit in a comfy chair and relax as much as you can.

Take a slow normal breath (not a deep breath) and think “1” to yourself.

As you breathe out, think “relax”.

Breathe in again and think “2”.

Breathe out and think “relax”

Keep doing this up to 10. When you reach 10, reverse and start back down to 1. Try to put all else out of your mind. Try to see the numbers and the word “relax” in your mind’s eye.

An Alternative Nostril Breathing Exercise – purifying breath:

Your nose is exceptionally clever. Simply by practising a few rounds of alternate nostril breathing (pranayama) for a few minute each day, you can help restore imbalances in your brain – improve sleep – calm you emotional state – boost your thinking – calm your nervous system.

- Step one: Use right thumb to close off right nostril
 - Step two: Inhale slowly through left nostril
 - Step three: Pause for a second
 - Step four: Now close left nostril with ring finger and release thumb off right nostril
 - Step five: Exhale through your right nostril
 - Step six: Now, inhale through right nostril
 - Step seven: Pause
 - Step eight: Use thumb to close off right nostril
 - Step nine: Breathe out through left nostril
 - Step ten: This is one round. Start slowly with 1 or 2 rounds and gradually increase. Never force.
- Sit quietly for a few moments after you have finished.