

BREATHING TECHNIQUES

Learning to use your breath to regulate your mood is an effective, free tool you have at your disposal 24/7! Studies suggest that diaphragmatic breathing is not only good for your overall health but also decreases physiologic stress markers. We all know how important keeping stress at bay is for our mind, body and spirit. Have fun with these breathing exercises!

DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

This is the correct way to breathe and can be performed 24/7! Check out this video to learn more:

[CLICK HERE](#)

BALANCED (WATER) BREATHING

Water breath is balancing. It is always a good choice, day or night; and it can be used freely without a worry. Just like you can safely sip water throughout the day, you can resort to balanced breathing anytime. It is very simple to perform.

HOW TO: Relax the neck, shoulders, jaw and scalp. Breathe in for four counts, then out for four counts. In/out through the nose or in through the nose/out through the mouth are both options.

ENERGIZING (COFFEE) BREATHING

Coffee breath is up-regulating, wakes you up, and prepares your body for activity and exercise. It goes without saying that it would not be wise to drink coffee all day and this concept rings true for the energizing breath as well. This breathing exercise will stimulate your sympathetic nervous system which will put you in fighting mode. If you need an afternoon pick me up, this can be a great tool. It's important to note that this style will reduce CO₂ in your bloodstream since you are going to be exhaling at a rapid pace, which in turn will constrict your blood vessels. Practice coffee breathing with care and only for a short amount of time. Use it sparingly. .

HOW TO: Relax the neck, shoulders, jaw and scalp. Focus only on your exhale. Make sharp, quick shooting breaths out through your nose for 20 counts. Return to a few normal breaths, repeat 2x. Be sure to exhale out through your nose. Keep your shoulders relaxed, the movement should be coming from your lower abdomen.

RELAXING (WHISKEY) BREATHING

Whiskey breathing is down-regulating, relieves stress, and can help put you to sleep. Contrary to coffee breathing, it will stimulate your parasympathetic nervous system. This brings you into a state of “rest and digest”. That being said it is ideal to perform this style as you are falling asleep, after a meal to aid in digestion or if you feel a need to reduce anxiety. Be sure to only use whiskey breathing when you are sitting or lying down and never while you are driving!

HOW TO: Relax the neck, shoulders, jaw and scalp. Breathe in for four counts, then out for eight counts. In/out through the nose or in through the nose/out through the mouth are both options.

NOTE:

These breathing patterns are defined by different rates of breathing, meaning how fast or how slowly you breathe. You are probably breathing about 8-15 breaths per minute as you read this. This is considered the “normal” rate. You can instantly affect your nervous system with these breathing exercises. Water breathing will have an adaptogenic effect meaning if you are down it will bring you up and vice versa. Coffee breathing will stimulate you and bring you up, whisky breathing will calm you down. .

RECAP

WATER - Use anytime you need balance. 4 counts on the inhale, 4 counts on the exhale. Ten breaths. Consider it your sip of water.

WHISKEY - Used to be put to sleep, improve digestion or calmed down. Use this when you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed. Inhale for 4 counts, exhale for 8 counts. 20 rounds.

COFFEE - Use this as your “pick me up”. Use sparingly! Focus on the exhale. 3 rounds of 20 quick short exhales. Good times to use are in the morning, before exercise and at

3pm if you are feeling the afternoon slump.

