

**MY BREATH  
WORK EXERCISES  
PACK**



# **FOCUSING ON BREATHING**

## **The Benefits of Deep Breathing**

Slows down the heart beat rate and lowers blood pressure

Slows down racing thoughts and helps to reduce anxiety

Increases the feelings of calmness and relaxation

It creates a pause and helps take you out of the “Fight, flight, freeze” heightened state

Increases emotional regulation and self control

Allows the mind to recover and think more clearly and aids concentration

Stimulates the pre-frontal cortex of the brain

Increases oxygen around the brain and body aiding recovery

# BELLY BREATHING

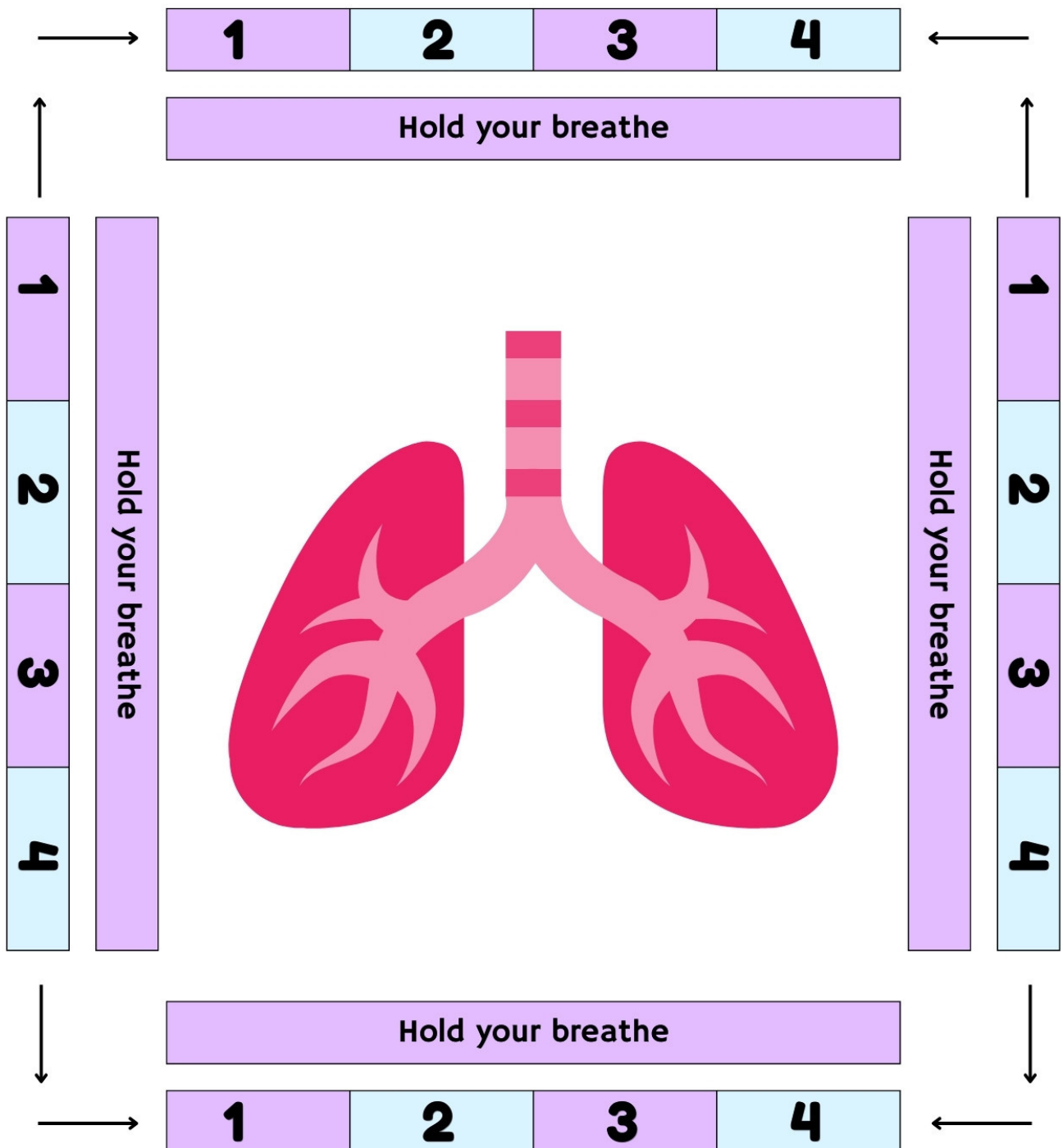
## ALSO KNOWN AS DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

- Position one hand on your chest and the other just beneath your ribcage.
- Take a gradual breath in through your nostrils, notice the air travelling downwards towards your abdomen.
- Your belly should expand and protrude outward while your chest stays relatively stable.
- Slowly exhale for a few seconds. Notice the difference between the air in the abdomen and the air in the chest



# SQUARE BREATHING

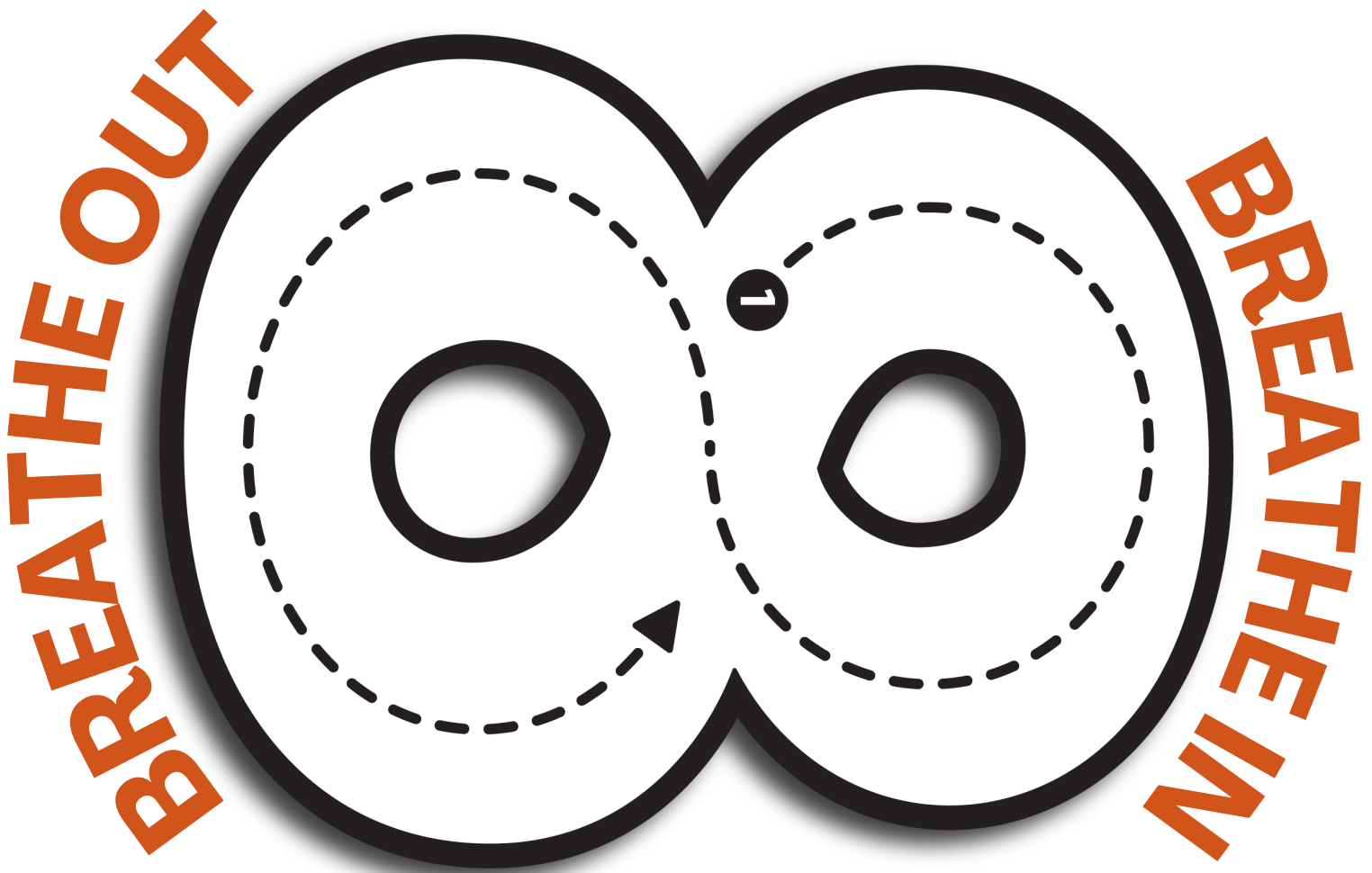
Focus on your breathing and count to four.  
Recognise, your breathing slowing, your thoughts  
slowing, your body relaxing





# LAZY 8 BREATHING

Starting at the number 1 using your finger trace the number eight, taking a slow deep breath in



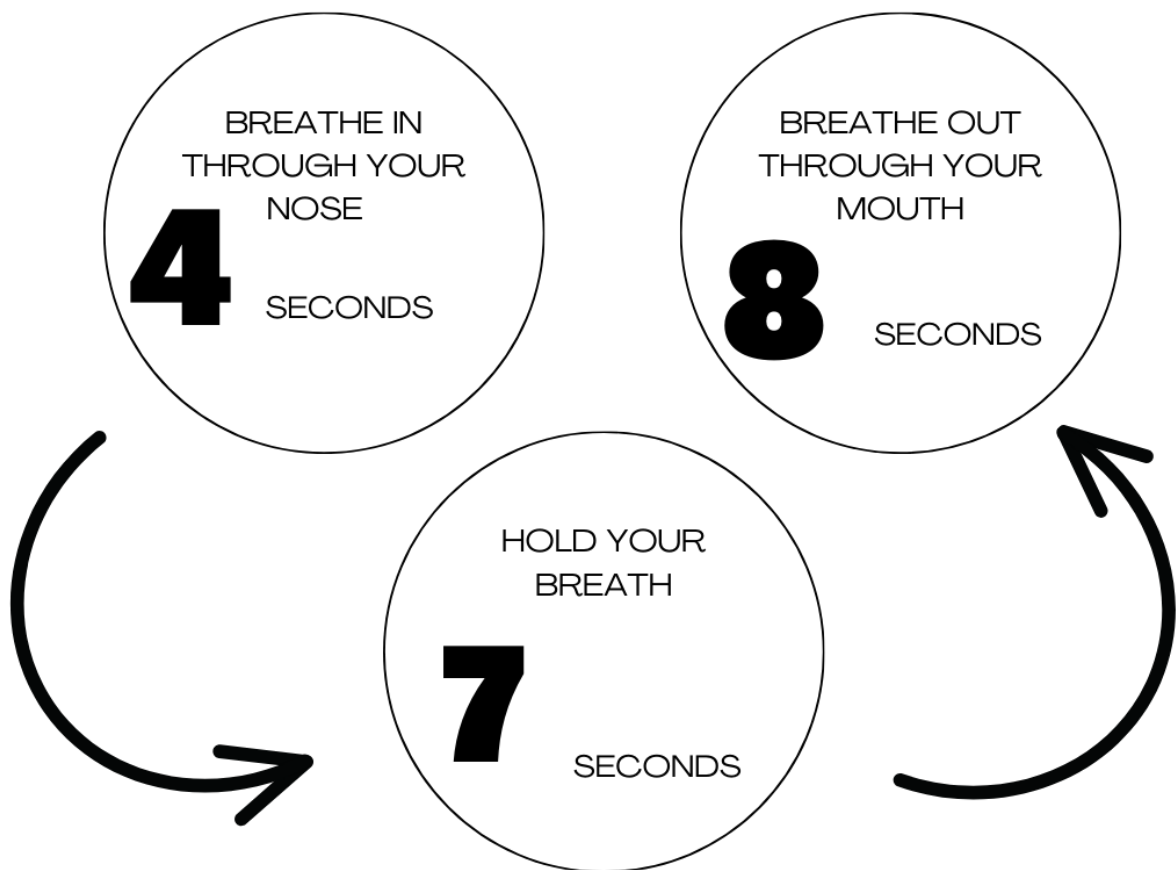
As you cross over to the other side of the lazy eight, slowly breathe out

Repeat the process until you feel calmer

# FOCUSING ON BREATHING

## 4-7-8 BREATHING TECHNIQUE

This breathing technique can aid relaxation and calm racing thoughts. start by sitting or lying in a comfortable position



**REPEAT TECHNIQUE 4 TIMES.**

Any breathing technique is best practised before times of great stress and anxiety, and whilst you are not doing anything that requires concentration. learning breathing techniques might leave you feeling light headed until you are used to using it.

If you feel light headed try halving the time and slowly build up to 4-7-8



# SAKE BREATHING

Stand with your legs comfortably apart and your hands by your sides. Close your eyes.

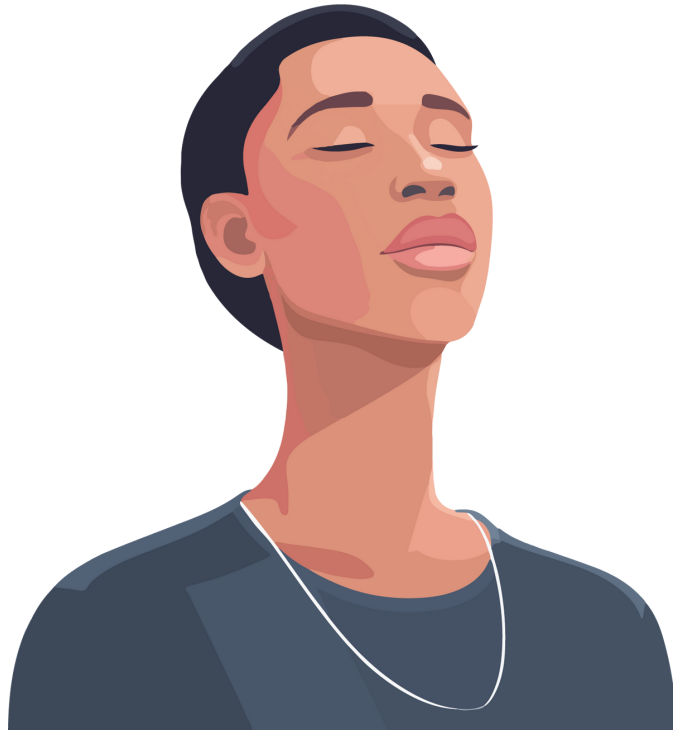


Take a long, slow breath in through your nose for a count of four. Hold the breath for a moment and then make a smooth, even hissing sound as you breathe out through your mouth for a count of four

Repeat the process until you feel calmer

# COUNTING BREATHES

Counting your breaths is a deceptively simple Zen Buddhist practice.



- Sit quietly with your eyes closed and the crown of your head extending upwards
- Breathe deeply and naturally, counting as you exhale
- When you get to five, start at one again

Concentrate on the numbers



# BUTTERFLY BREATHING

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed. Place your fingertips gently on your shoulders.



Take a slow, gentle breath in through your nose, raising your elbows as you breathe in. Hold your breath for a moment and then breathe out as slowly and calmly as you can, lowering your elbows slowly as you breathe out.

Repeat until you feel relaxed

# NOSE BREATHING

Nose breathing is a deep breathing exercise that gives us tactile and auditory feedback because we can hear and feel air as it slowly passes through each naris (the technical name for opening to the nasal cavity - nostril) if we concentrate on it



- Sit and relax
- Breathe deeply in and out of the nose with the mouth closed
- Pay really close attention to the feeling and sound of air as it passes the opening of your nose.
- Do this for 10 breaths



# EAGLE BREATHING

Stand with your legs comfortably apart and your hands by your sides. Your legs should be straight with your knees slightly forward and not locked.

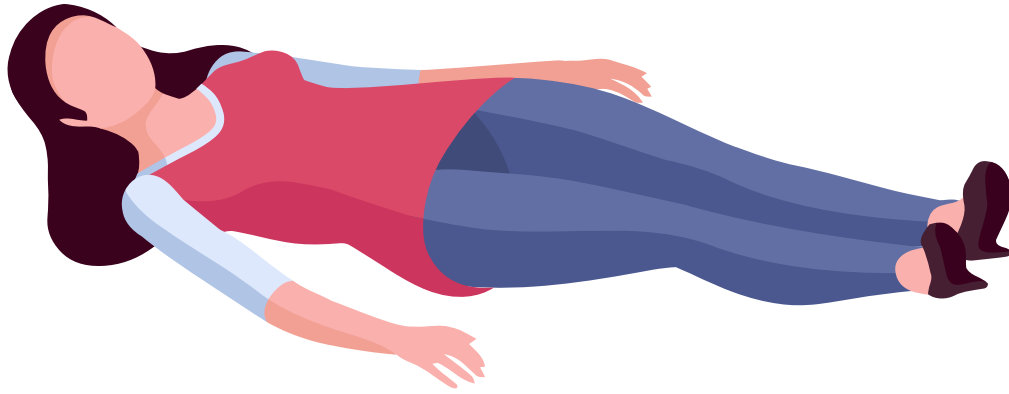
Close your eyes.



Take a slow, gentle breath in through your nose, slowly raising your arms out to the side and up above you like a strong, majestic eagle. Hold your breath for a moment and then breathe out as calmly as you can, lowering your arms slowly as you breathe.

# RESONANT BREATHING

Resonant breathing, also called coherent breathing, can help you calm anxiety and get into a relaxed state. To try it yourself:



Lie down and close your eyes.

Gently breathe in through your nose, mouth closed, for a count of six seconds.

Don't fill your lungs too full of air.

Exhale for six seconds, allowing your breath to leave your body slowly and gently. Don't force it.

Continue for up to 10 minutes.

Take a few additional minutes to be still and focus on how your body feels.



# BLUE SKY BREATHING

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed.

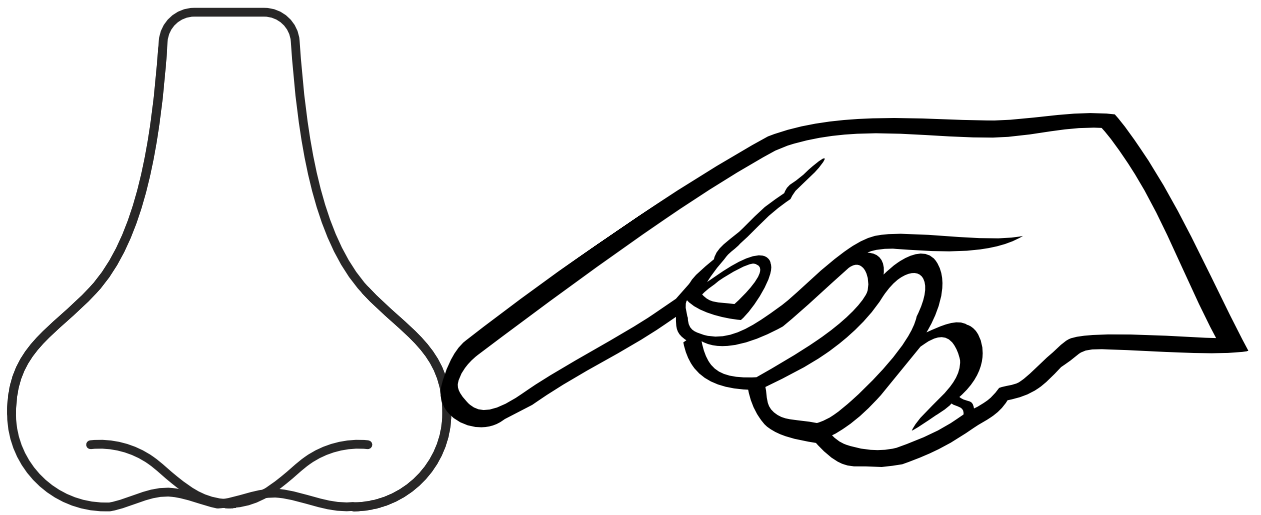


Take a long, slow breath in through your nose for a count of four, imagining that you are breathing in a beautiful, clear blue sky. Hold the breath for a moment and then breathe out through your mouth for a count of four, imagining you are breathing out a cold, grey sky.

# NOSTRIL BREATHING

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed.

Place your pointer finger firmly against one side of your nose, blocking the nostril on that side from letting air into the nostril.



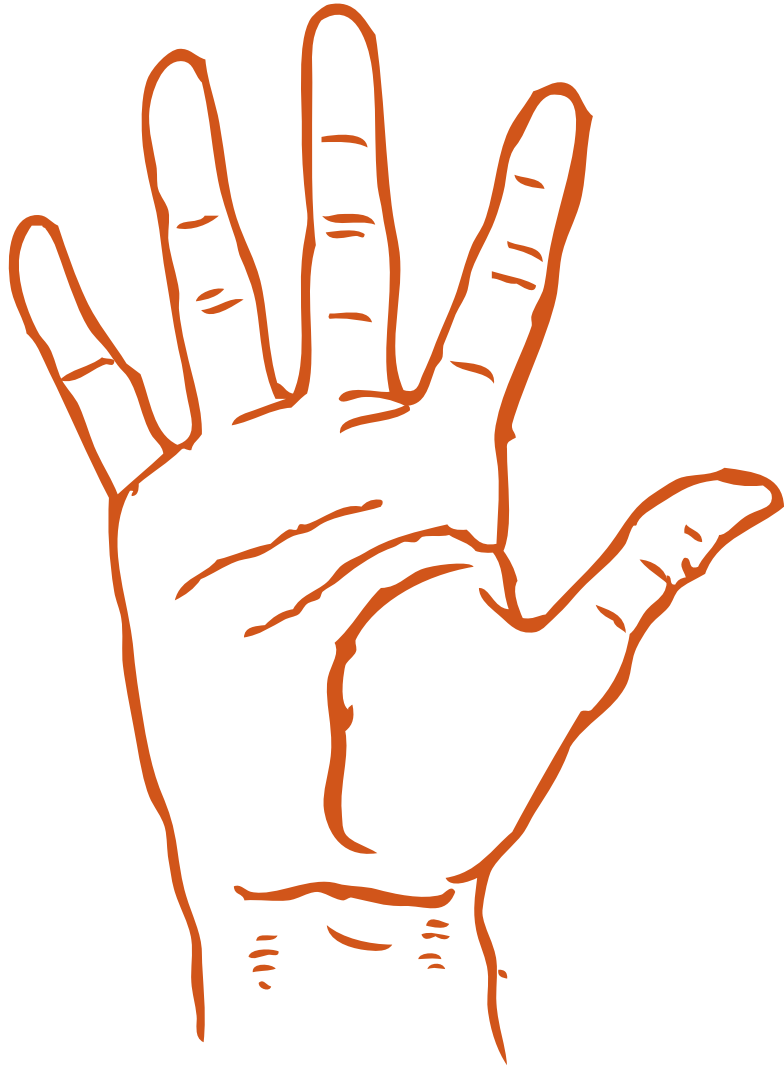
Breathe in slowly for a count of four through the other, open nostril.

Hold the breath for a count of two, moving your pointer finger to the other side of your nose to now block the open nostril and breathe out slowly for a count of four through the now open nostril..

Repeat 5 times alternating the blocked nostrils

# HAND BREATHING

This exercise uses visual and motor skills to help focus on the breathing process



Using your finger trace up and down each finger. As you move slowly up each finger/thumb inhale through your nose. At the top pause for 2 seconds. Then slowly exhale through your mouth as you move down the finger/thumb

Repeat until both hands are complete

# RAINBOW BREATHING

Stand with your legs comfortably apart and your hands out to the sides of your body, with your palms facing outwards. Close your eyes.



Take a slow, gentle breath in through your nose, raising your arms up to meet in the middle as you breathe.

Hold your breath for a moment and then breathe out as slowly and calmly as you can, lowering your arms as you breathe.

Repeat five times



# GOLDEN GLOW BREATHING

Lie down on your back with your legs relaxed and your hands resting by your sides. Close your eyes.



Breathe in deeply through your nose and imagine the breath as a golden glow moving all the way down your body to your toes. Exhale. Inhale again, this time imagining the golden light moving up to your lower legs. Exhale.

Repeat as the light moves up your body - to your upper legs, stomach, chest, shoulders, neck and face, imagining the light resting on each area as you breathe.

# OCEAN BREATHING

Sit comfortably on the floor with your eyes closed.



Gently cover your ears with the palms of your hands. Imagine you are standing on the beach looking out at the ocean. The waves gently lap at the sand, swooshing in and out.

Keeping your hands in place, breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four and then breathe out slowly for a count of four.

# BEE BREATHING

Choose a comfortable sitting position. Gently place the tips of your pointer fingers in your ears and close your eyes.



Breathe in slowly through your nose and then hum quietly as you breathe slowly out.

Repeat 10 times or until you feel relaxed

# HOT AIR BALLOON BREATHING

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed. Imagine standing on top of a grassy hill with a beautiful hot air balloon in front of you.



Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four, pause and then breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of four.

As you continue to breathe, imagine placing any worries or angry thoughts you are feeling into the basket beneath the balloon.

Then imagine these thoughts floating away from you as the balloon floats further away each time you exhale.



# EAR RUB BREATHING

Sit comfortably on the floor with your eyes closed.



Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four and then breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of four.

Continue to breathe in this way as you use your thumbs and pointer fingers to give your ears a gentle massage, starting at the top and moving all the way down to the bottom of each ear.

# BUBBLE BREATHING

Sit comfortably with your eyes closed.

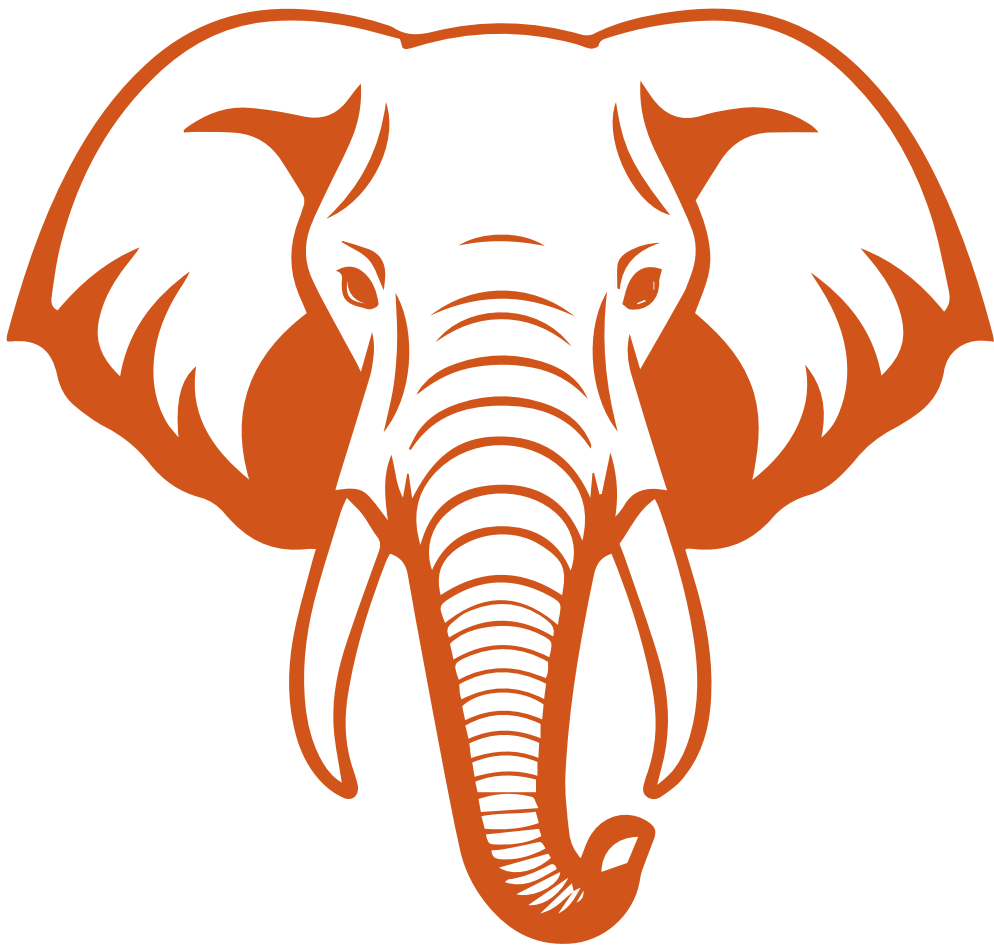
Begin by imagining you are holding a  
bubble wand



Breathe in deeply and then, as you breathe out slowly and gently, imagine you are blowing bubbles into the room. Imagine the bubbles are filled with peace or love or happiness, and that you are filling the whole room with peaceful, happy feelings. As you keep breathing slowly and blowing your imaginary bubbles, feel your body become calm and relaxed.

# ELEPHANT BREATHING

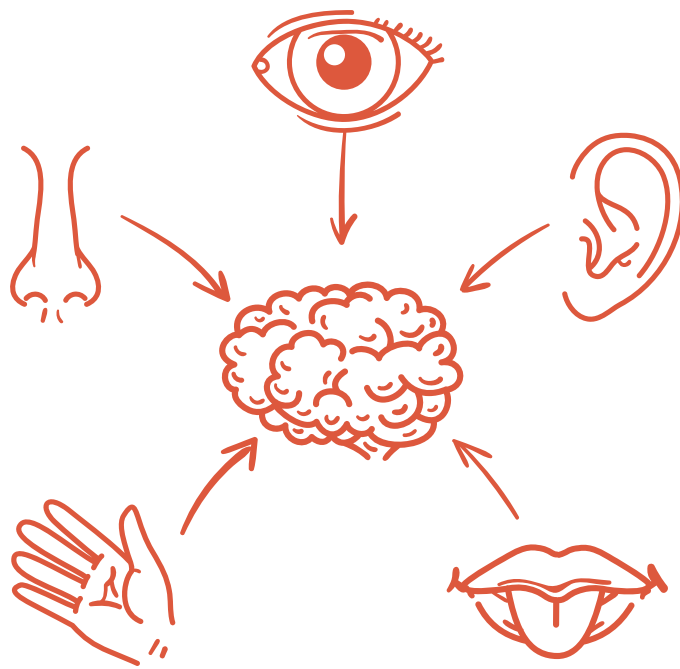
Stand with your feet wide apart and your arms dangling in front of your body like an elephant's trunk.



As you breathe in deeply through your nose for a count of four, raise your arms up high above your head. Pause and then slowly swing your arms down again as you breathe out through your mouth.

## 5 SENSES BREATHING

Sit comfortably on the floor with your eyes closed. Imagine you are sitting somewhere quiet and restful. Just sit for a minute, imagining this peaceful place.

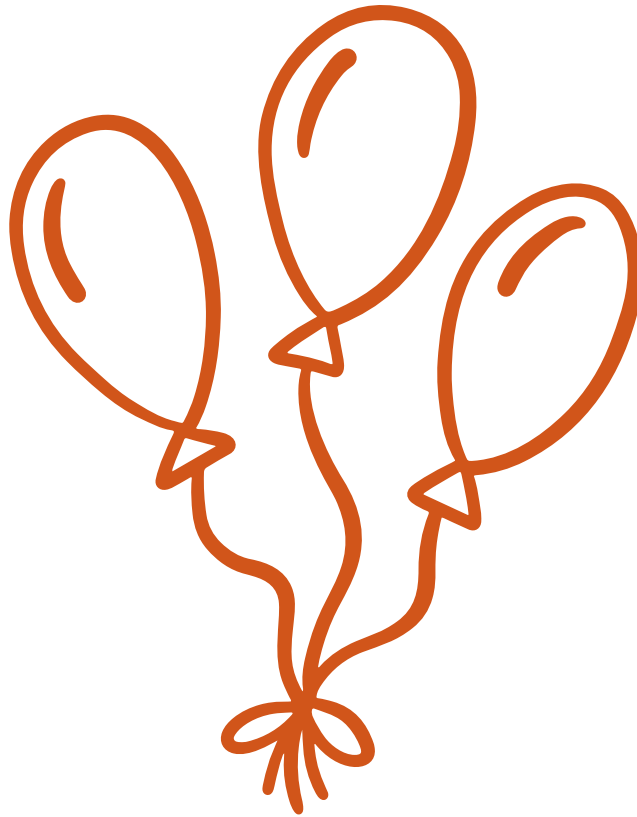


Take a slow breath in through your nose for a count of four, as you breathe focus on what you can see in your mind. Hold the breath for a moment and then breathe out through your mouth for a count of four. With the next breath in, focus on what you can hear around you. With the next breath focus on what you can smell, then feel and then taste.



# BALLOON BREATHING

Sitting in a comfortable position, place your hands around your mouth as if you were about to blow up a balloon



Take a deep breath in through your nose and, as you slowly exhale through your mouth, start to spread your hands out as if you are blowing up a great big balloon. Hold your hand position as you inhale again and then spread your hands further as you exhale. Once your balloon is as big as it can be, gently sway from side to side as you release your balloon up into the sky.

# LENGTHENING THE EXHALE

## BREATHING

Inhaling deeply may not always calm you down. Taking a deep breath in is actually linked to the sympathetic nervous system, which controls the fight-or-flight response. But exhaling is linked to the parasympathetic nervous system, which influences our body's ability to relax and calm down. When we feel anxious or under stress, it's easier to breathe too much and end up hyperventilating — even if we're trying to do the opposite.

Before you take a big, deep breath, try a thorough exhale instead. Push all the air out of your lungs, then simply let your lungs do their work inhaling air.

Next, try spending a little bit longer exhaling than you do inhaling. For example, try inhaling for four seconds, then exhale for six.

Try doing this for two to five minutes.

This technique can be done in any position that's comfortable for you, including standing, sitting, or lying down.

# KINDNESS BREATHING

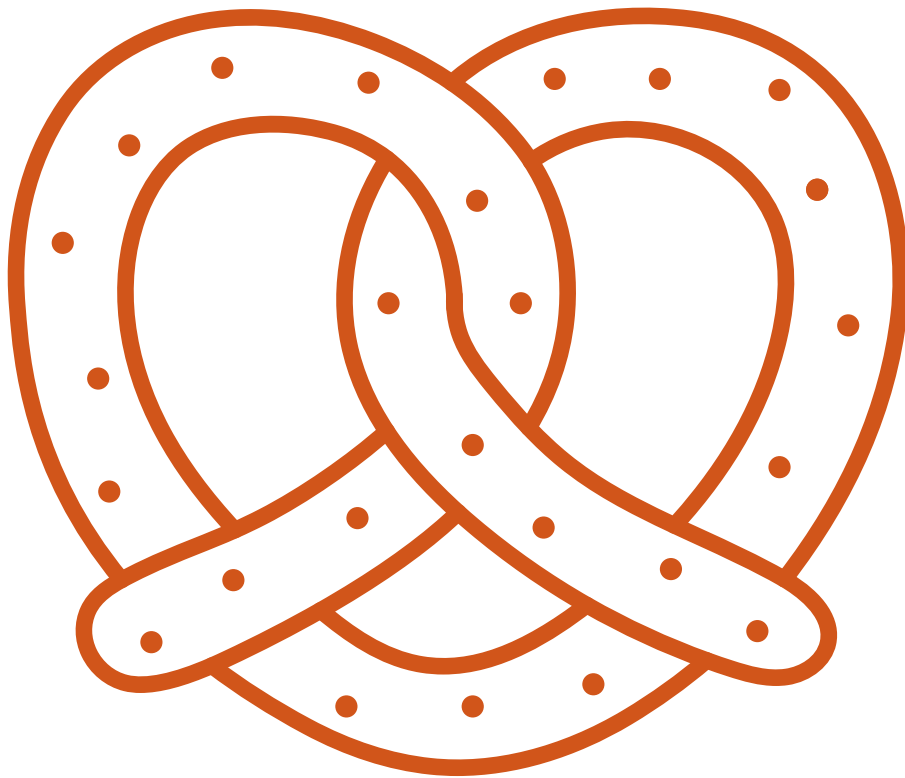
Stand comfortably with your feet together and your hands by your sides.



Extend your arms out to either side. Bend one knee slightly, setting your toes on the floor and resting your heel on the other ankle. Lift your hands up towards the sky, imagining you are a tree with your branches spread wide. Imagine kindness flowing out of your heart, spreading along your arms and out into the world as you breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four and then slowly out for a count of four. Lower your arms and foot.

# PRETZEL BREATHING

Sit comfortably on the floor, back straight. Cross your arms in front of your body and place your hands palms together. Interlace your fingers. Close your eyes.



Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four, pause for a count of two and then breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of four.



# THE HUG BREATHING

Sit comfortably on the floor with your eyes closed.



Cross your hands across your body, giving yourself a great, big hug. Focus your thoughts on something or someone you are grateful for.

Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four and then breathe out slowly through your mouth for a count of four.

# HERO BREATHING

Stand with your legs comfortably apart and your arms bent out at your sides, your hands held up in fists, like you are a strong and showing your muscles.



Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of four, raising your arms up slightly and gently clench your fingers to form a loose fist. Hold for a count of two and then breathe out slowly for a count of four, bringing your arms back down and bending your knees slightly as you exhale and gently straighten your fingers.

Repeat for 4 to 5 times

# MONKEY BREATHING

Sit with your back tall, holding your arms comfortably in front of your belly.



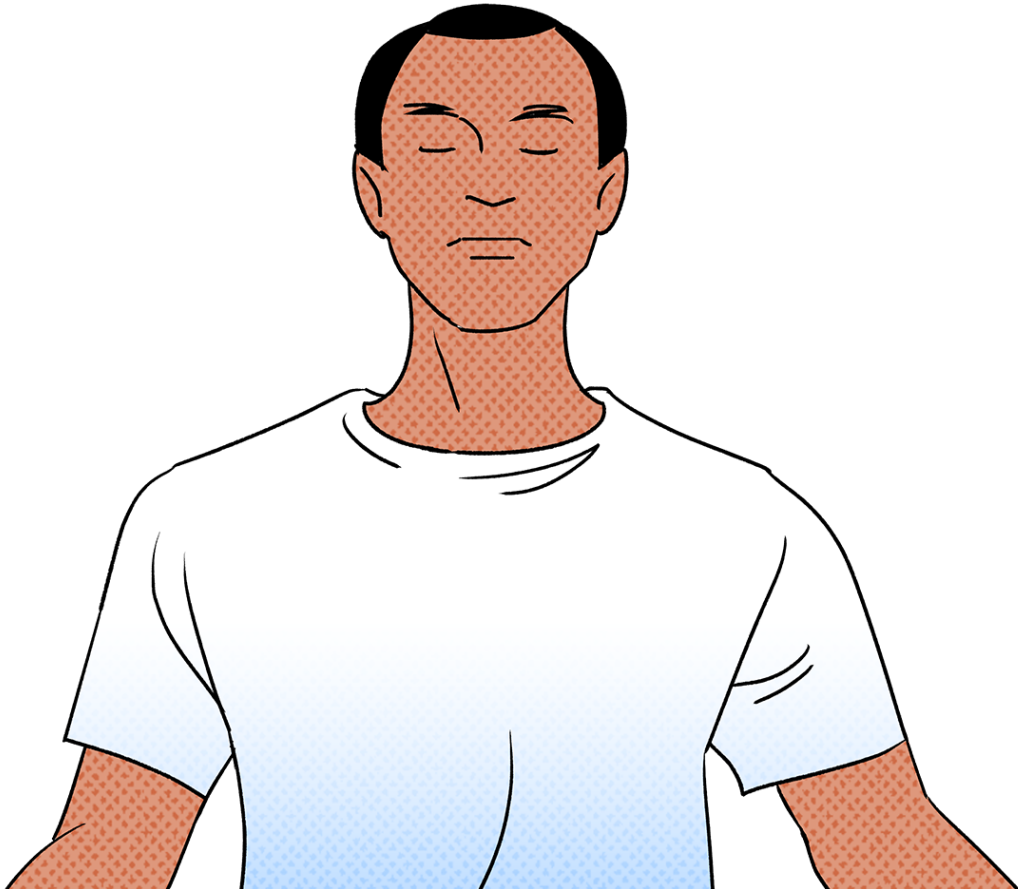
Take a deep breath in, bending one elbow up to the side as you breathe.

Breathe out with a quick powerful breath, bringing the arm back down to sit in front of your belly. Repeat on the other side.

Repeat this set 4 to 5 times

# SHOULDER ROLL BREATHING

Choose a comfortable sitting position.



As you take a slow, deep breath in through your nose raise your shoulders up towards your ears. Breathe slowly out through your mouth, lowering your shoulders as you exhale. Repeat slowly, rolling your shoulders up and down in time with your breath.

Repeat this set 4 to 5 times

# BACK TO BACK BREATHING

Find a partner and sit on the floor back to back.  
Sit tall and close your eyes.

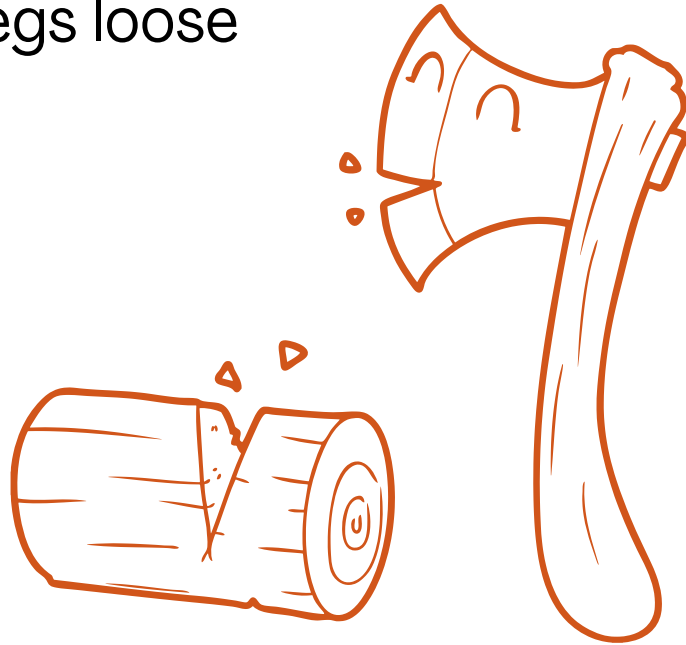


Decide who will start – that person begins by inhaling deeply and then exhaling slowly, and then continues to breathe slowly and deeply. Their partner should feel the expansion in their partner's back each time they breathe in and try to sync their own breathing so that both partners are breathing in time together.

Repeat this set 4 to 5 times

# CHOPPING WOOD BREATHING

Stand tall in a comfortable position with your feet apart (a little wider than hip-width) and knees slightly forward and legs loose



Clasp your hands together in front of your body. Take a long breath in through you nose, whilst raising your hands above your head. Then, on a vigorous exhale with your mouth open, forcefully take your hands down between your legs. Hang your head and completely let go of all the tension in your body. Close your eyes, if that feels comfortable, and repeat the steps: long exhale with hands overhead, followed by vigorous exhale while bringing your hands down between your legs.

This is a great breathing exercise for releasing stress and extra energy.