

BREATH PRACTICES

When we are stressed, anxious or upset, our body is experiencing a stress response, otherwise known as a flight/fight response. This response causes a number of physiological changes to take place in our body, one of which is to our breath. In order to provide our mind and body with an increase in oxygen to support us to either fight or run away our breathing becomes more shallow and faster.

We are able to help our body return to a calm and grounded state by slowing down our breath and breathing more deeply. The breath practices below can assist you to feel more relaxed and in control in the moment but can also be used proactively, at any point in the day, to reduce overall levels of stress.

NOTE: the counts are given as guides, if they initially feel too long for you, start with a lower number of counts and work your way up over time.

Start by taking 2 big deep breaths in and out and then commence the breath practice:

Box Breath

1. Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4 - fill your belly with air
2. Pause/hold for a count of 4
3. Exhale through your mouth for a count of 4 - empty your belly
4. Pause/hold for a count of 4
5. Repeat 4 to 5 times.

4-7-8 Breath

1. Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4 - fill your belly with air
2. Pause/hold for a count of 7
3. Exhale through your mouth for a count of 8 - empty your belly
4. Repeat 4 to 5 times.