

De-Stress Breathing Exercises

Learn how to breathe like a newborn: correctly! Over time stress leads to abnormal breathing habits and patterns which affect your health. The average person takes around 22,000 breaths a day. These exercises teach you how to breath correctly and in a way that facilitates relaxation.

Stress in one's life will never go away. The intensity of your stress varies by the minute and comes in three forms; physical, chemical, and emotional. Your brain's goal is to rise to the occasion and deal with the stress, but afterward it needs to relax. A relaxed brain has time to rest the body, heal traumas, digest food, and smile.

Learn how to re-integrate your brain with your diaphragm with the following guidelines:

- De-Stress breathing is simple and can be done anywhere. While the exercise can be done in any position it is best when you start with 'alligator breathing'.
- Lay on your stomach. Feel your abdominal on the floor or bed. take a deep breath into your belly button area. You will feel your whole torso rise with the inhalation and lower with the exhalation.
- Place one hand on your chest and the other on your belly button. If you are lying down a book may be placed over your belly button. Place the tip of your tongue on the ridge behind your upper teeth and keep it there for the duration of the exercise.
- Inhale using only your diaphragm. When you do this correctly your stomach, but not your chest, will rise. You can try to push your stomach out forcefully to aid in the movement if you are having trouble.
- As you exhale, slightly open your mouth, releasing air slowly. The hand on your stomach should lower back towards your spine, the hand on your chest should not move. As you become more comfortable try a 4-7-8 count. Inhale for 4 counts, hold 7 counts, exhale for 8 counts.
- In order to feel the full effects of this exercise you must do it for a minimum of 5 minutes. When first starting the increased O₂ in your blood might cause some dizziness, so work your way up as needed.
- Do not be discouraged if it feels clumsy or your stomach or breath quiver, you are still training your muscles. As you improve, the exercise will induce a relaxed, stress free state that lowers your brain frequency, giving you an opportunity to rest and recover.
- In order to establish a proper breathing pattern repeat this exercise once or multiple times a day. A fairly permanent resting rate of brain activity can be achieved around the 4th or 5th month of consistent and regular exercise. Blood pressure improves, sleep comes easier, and life in general will not seem so stressful.
- Caution: Do not make this exercise another stressor in your life, it is about calming your body.