

Breath Technique for Getting the sleep you need

Try this practice anytime you can't sleep, either at bedtime or in the middle of the night when unable to return to sleep. If at any time during the breath practice, you feel uncomfortable, dizzy or light headed, stop, and allow the breath to return to normal. As you move through the practice, you could allow yourself to find where it is most comfortable for you and stay at that point. . .

Close your eyes. . .

- 1) Observe your posture. Allow yourself to move anytime during this practice so that you are as comfortable as possible. Allow the shoulders and neck to begin to relax, Bring ease into the legs, arms, back, abdomen, chest, neck and head. Continue encouraging the body to become more comfortable and at ease as you breathe naturally . . .
- 2) Bring awareness to the breath, be simply aware . . . Breathe naturally . . . observing the natural inhalation and exhalation of your breath without changing anything. . . at your own pace. . .
- 3) Begin by placing one hand on the abdomen . . . Observe the natural inhalation and exhalation of the breath without changing anything . . . become aware of the movement of the abdomen as you breathe. . .
- 4) Next exhale completely through the nose and at the end of the exhalation gently contract the abdomen –helping to push all the air out of the lungs, Next, slowly inhale through your nose, expanding the abdomen . . . Then slowly exhale through your nose contracting the abdomen . . . Inhale deeply, expanding the abdomen, exhale and gently contract the abdomen, continue relaxing the body . . .
- 5) Could stay with abdominal breath if that is comfortable for you or go back to a natural breath from this point – with the natural or abdominal breath add a mental note to each breath “in” – “out”. . .
- 6) Next begin to count the length of each inhalation and exhalation, if they are not already equal – try to make them equal for a few breaths, (such as inhale to a count of 3 – exhale to a count of 3) remember anytime this practice is no longer comfortable go back to the natural breath.
- 7) Next add as is comfortable, a longer count to the exhales, such as a count of 3 for the inhale, exhale 4-6.
- 8) Now add counting the breath, counting up to 10 inhalations/exhalations and then starting over.

Often with regular practice by #'s 4-6, one is asleep and wakes up fresh and rejuvenated for the day.

For Further Sleep Help and Guidelines During the COVID-19 Pandemic: National Sleep Foundation - <http://www.sleepfoundation.org/>