

# THE MINDFULNESS JOURNAL



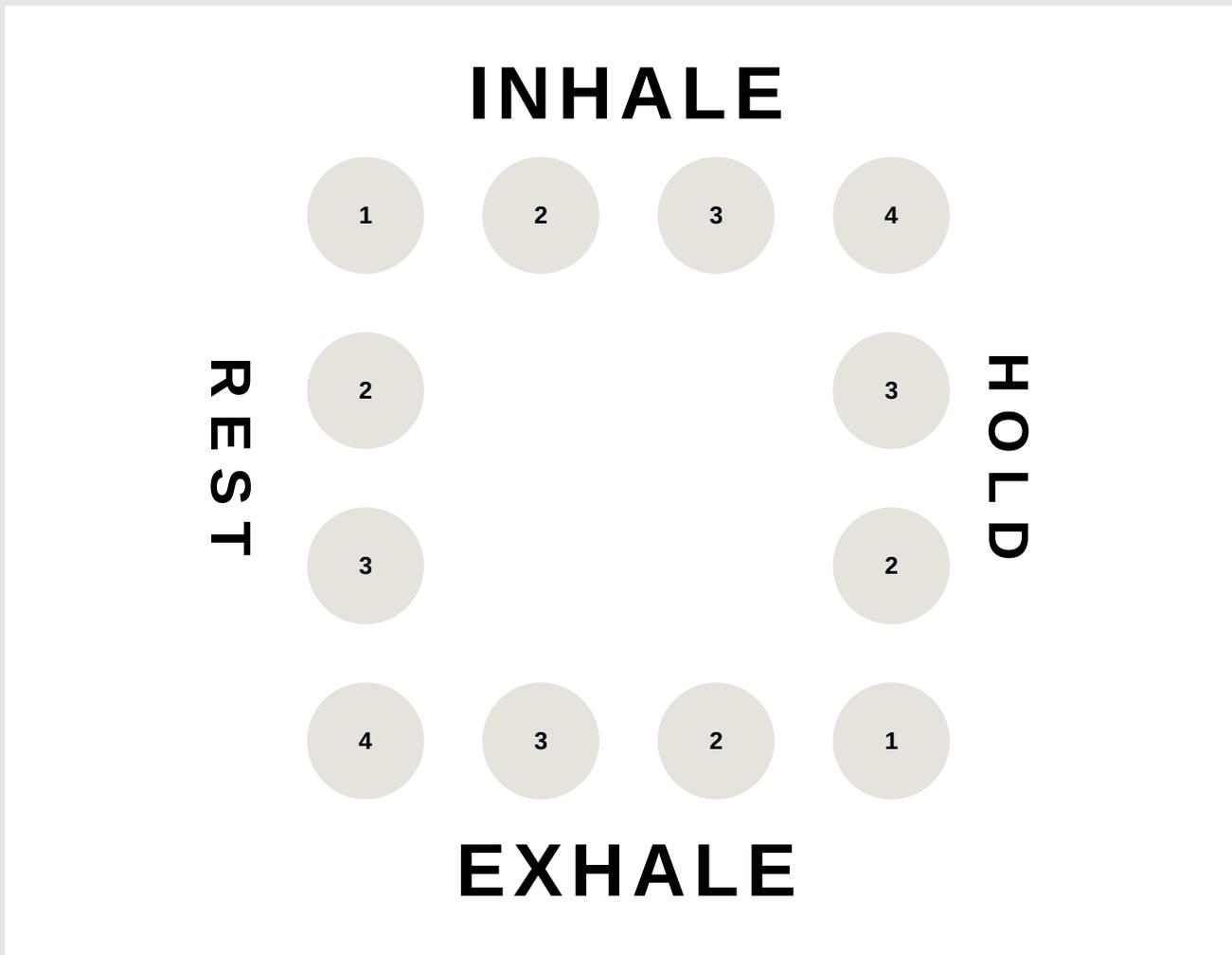
DISCOVER TRANQUILITY IN DAILY REFLECTIONS



# BREATHING & MINDFULNESS EXERCISES

# Box Breathing

Box breathing, also known as square breathing, is a simple yet effective technique to enhance focus and alleviate stress. This method involves equalizing the duration of each breath, creating a calming and rhythmic pattern.



Find a comfortable position. Maintain good posture with your spine straight and shoulders relaxed.

Inhale quietly through your nose for a count of four. Focus on filling your lungs with air.

Hold your breath for a count of four. Keep your body relaxed during this pause.

Exhale slowly and completely through your mouth for a count of four. Release tension as you breathe out.

Hold your breath for another count of four before beginning the next cycle.

Continue this pattern for 5-10 minutes, maintaining a steady and controlled rhythm.

# Diaphragmatic Breathing

**Diaphragmatic breathing, also known as deep belly breathing, is a fundamental technique to promote relaxation and reduce stress. This technique involves engaging the diaphragm to facilitate deep and slow breaths, promoting a sense of calmness.**

Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Place one hand on your chest and the other on your abdomen.

Inhale deeply through your nose, allowing your abdomen to expand. Focus on filling your lungs with air, rather than lifting your chest.

Exhale slowly and completely through your mouth. Feel your abdomen contract as you expel the air.

Inhale for a count of four, hold for a count of two, and exhale for a count of six. Adjust the counts based on your comfort.

Practice this diaphragmatic breathing for 5-10 minutes. If your mind wanders, gently bring your focus back to your breath.



# Star Breathing

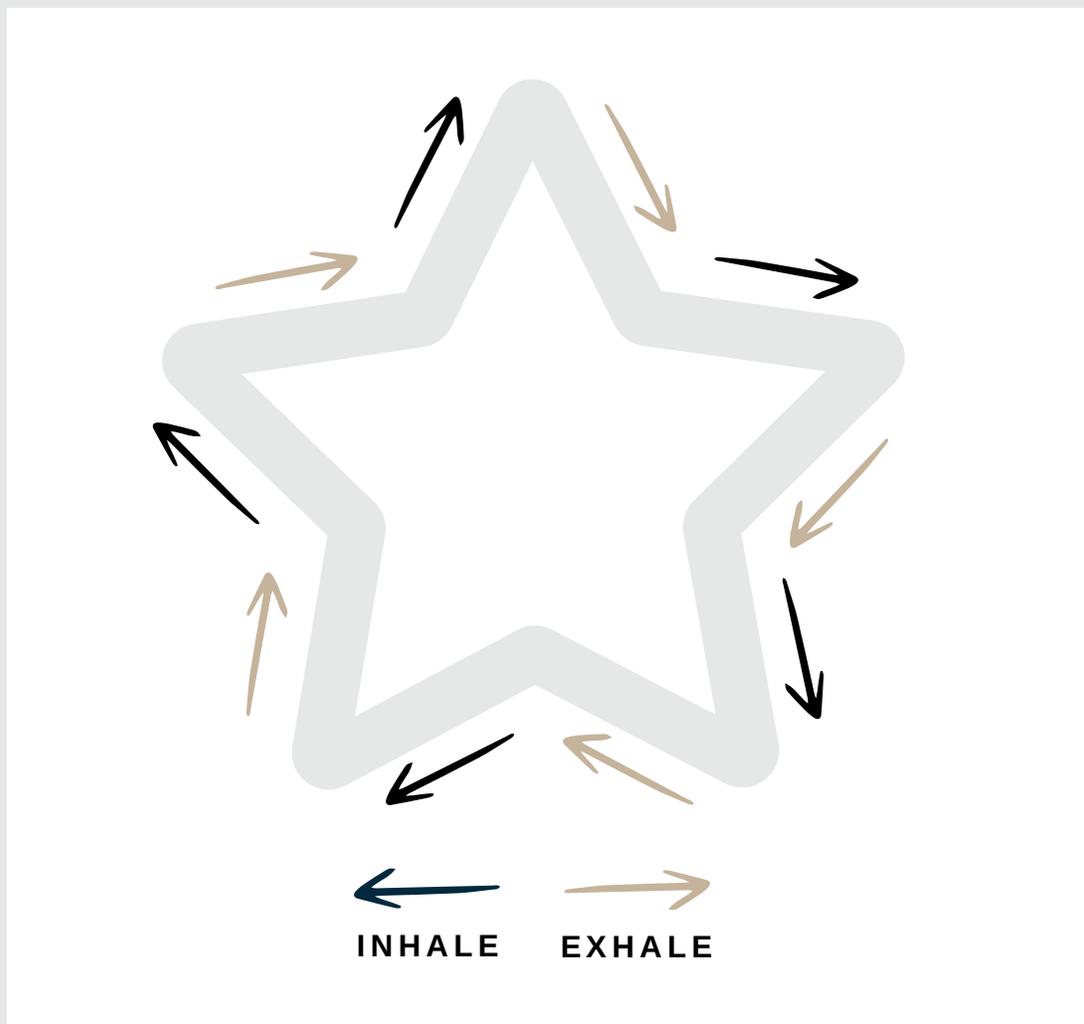
**Star breathing is a calming and imaginative technique that encourages mindfulness and controlled breathing. This exercise uses the visualization of a star shape to guide your breath and bring a sense of focus and relaxation.**

Close your eyes and visualize a star in your mind. Picture its five points, and let it serve as a guide for your breath.

As you breathe in, visualize moving along one side of the star.

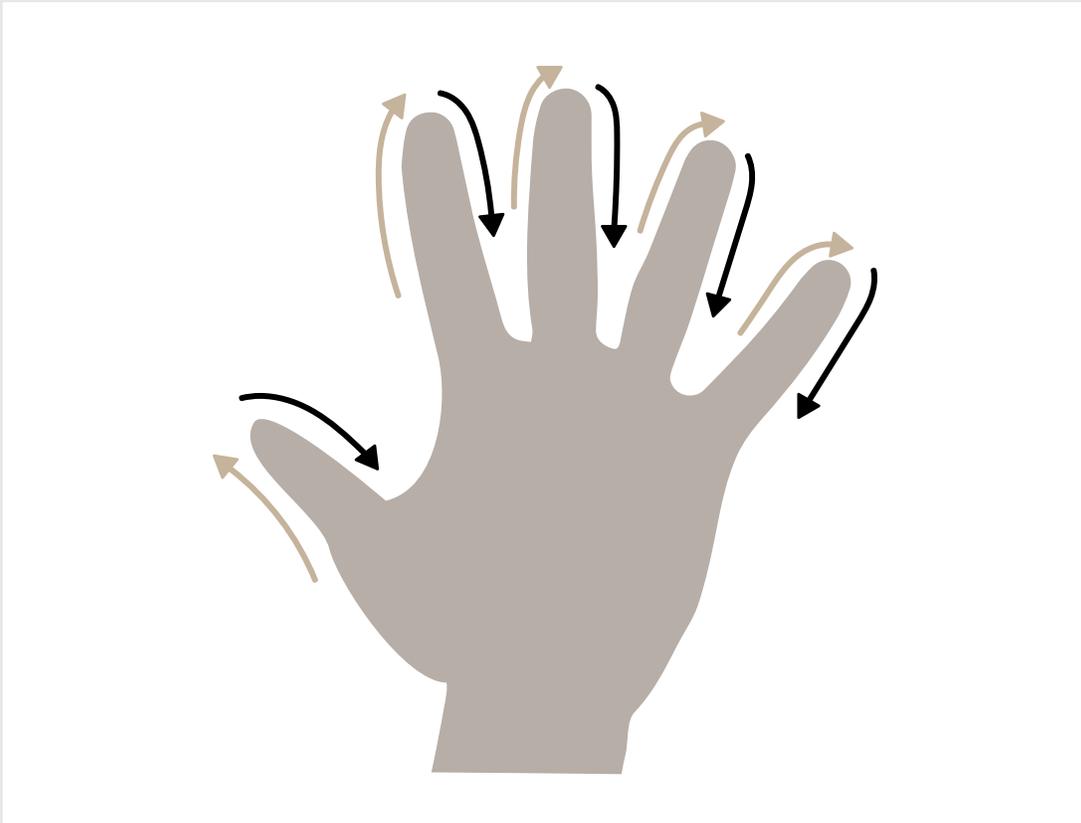
Then as you exhale, visualize moving along the next side of the star.

Continue in this way around the imaginary star for 5 minutes.



# Finger Breathing

**Finger breathing is a simple and effective technique that combines mindful breathing with tactile stimulation. This exercise utilizes the fingers to guide your breath, promoting focus, relaxation, and stress reduction.**



Find a comfortable seated position. Rest your hands on your knees with your palms facing up. Each finger will represent a different part of the breathing cycle.

As you breathe in, slowly trace the outline of your thumb with the index finger of the opposite hand. Inhale deeply and fully.

As you exhale, trace the outline of your index finger with your thumb. Release the breath slowly and completely.

Repeat the process for each finger, inhaling as you trace up and exhaling as you trace down. Move through all five fingers.

Repeat for 5-10 minutes



# Lengthen the Exhale

**Lengthening the exhale is a powerful breathing technique that promotes relaxation and activates the body's parasympathetic nervous system. This exercise focuses on extending the duration of your exhale, encouraging a deeper sense of calm and mindfulness.**

Inhaling deeply does not always work to calm you down. If you take too many deep breaths too quickly, this can cause you to hyperventilate and this hyperventilation decreases the amount of oxygen-rich blood that flows to your brain. Therefore, next time you're feeling anxious, before taking a big, deep breath, try a big exhale instead.

1. Find a position that is comfortable for you, either standing, sitting, or lying down.
  2. Forcibly, push all the air out of your lungs, then let your lungs naturally fill up with air.
  3. Next, inhale for a count of 4 and then exhale for a count of 6.
  4. Repeat this for 2 to 5 minutes.
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# Lazy 8 Breathing

**Lazy 8 breathing, also known as infinity breathing, is a delightful and calming technique that combines breath awareness with a visual pattern. This exercise uses the shape of the infinity symbol ( $\infty$ ) to guide your breath, fostering mindfulness and relaxation.**

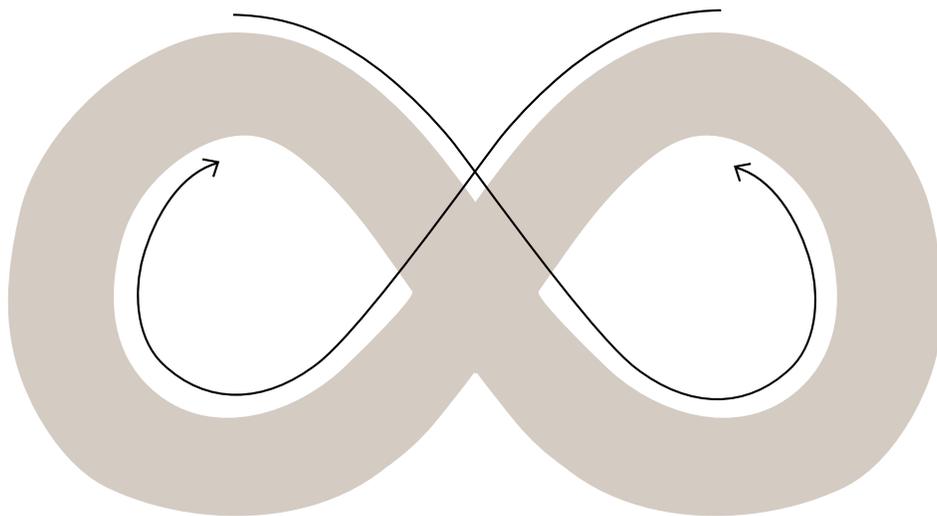
Imagine the shape of the number 8 lying on its side ( $\infty$ ), creating a continuous and flowing pattern.

Begin your breath in the middle of the 8. Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose as you trace the first loop upwards.

Exhale slowly and completely through your mouth as you trace the second loop downwards. Allow your breath to match the movement.

Continue this pattern, inhaling as you trace the first loop and exhaling as you trace the second loop. Visualize the breath flowing effortlessly with the shape.

Repeat the lazy 8 pattern for 5-10 minutes, maintaining a gentle and rhythmic flow.



# Progressive Muscle Relaxation

**Progressive muscle involves tensing and relaxing all the major body muscle groups. Throughout the exercise, keep your breathing deep and regular.**

**FACE:** Raise your eyebrows as high as possible and wrinkle your forehead. Squeeze your eyes shut tight, clench your teeth together and squash your whole face up.

**NECK:** Place your chin down toward your chest and turn your head slowly to the right and then to the left.

**CHEST:** Take as deep a breath as possible pushing your chest out and hold it for a count of 5 then release.

**SHOULDERS:** Shrug your shoulders and hold for a count of 5. Then, slowly pull your shoulders back and then push your shoulders forward.

**UPPER BACK:** Arch your back and release.

**ABDOMEN:** Pull in your tummy then push it out.

**HANDS & ARMS:** clench both fists, squeezing them as hard as you can. Tighten both biceps and hold this tension for several seconds. Release the tension and feel your arms relax.

**LEGS:** Raise your right leg, tense your thigh and calf muscles, and pull your toes back toward you. Then, repeat for the left leg.

**FEET:** Point your toes then pull your toes toward you as far as possible.





# 54321 Grounding Technique

**The 54321 Grounding Technique is a mindfulness exercise designed to bring awareness to the present moment by engaging your senses. This technique helps ground your thoughts and emotions, fostering a sense of calmness and stability.**

**5 things you see:**

**4 things you feel**

**3 things you hear**

**2 things you smell**

**1 thing you taste**