

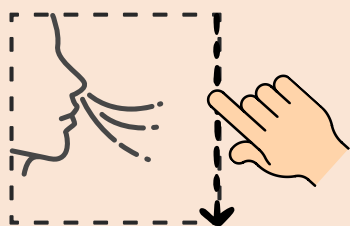
Breathing Techniques for Stress Relief & Emotional Regulation

Breathing exercises help calm the nervous system, reduce anxiety, & bring the body back into balance. Below are several simple, effective techniques you can begin practicing today. Each can be used during moments of stress, before sleep, during therapy work, or as part of a daily wellness routine.

Diaphragmatic Breathing (Belly Breathing)

1. Place one hand on your chest and one on your belly.
2. Breathe in through your nose, letting your belly gently rise.
3. Exhale slowly through your mouth, allowing the belly to fall.
4. Aim for slow, smooth breaths.

Tip: Your belly—not your chest—should do most of the movement.



Box Breathing (Four-Square Breathing)

1. Inhale through your nose for **4 seconds**.
2. Hold for **4 seconds**.
3. Exhale through your mouth for **4 seconds**.
4. Hold again for **4 seconds**.

Tip: Visualize tracing the sides of a square as you breathe.

Paced Breathing (Extended Exhale)

- Inhale for 4 seconds, exhale for 6–8 seconds.
- Keep the exhale longer than the inhale.
- Continue for 1–3 minutes.

Tip: Longer exhalations help shift the body into the parasympathetic “rest and digest” system.



Coherent Breathing

1. Breathe in for **5 seconds**.
2. Breathe out for **5 seconds**.
3. Continue for 1–5 minutes.

Tip: Smooth, steady rhythm helps regulate mood & energy.

Helpful Reminders

- Practice for short periods daily rather than only in moments of distress.
- Your breath should feel gentle and never forced.
- Consistency creates the benefits: even 1–2 minutes can help.