

Breathing

One of the most powerful ways to relieve tension and calm the bodies systems is with breathing techniques. Learning to breathe more deeply can make you feel a lot calmer and increase a sense of deep relaxation, connect with our inner self, and promote wellbeing. Breathing in oxygen is an essential part of life.

Abdominal breathing

When we are stressed we breathe into chest area, making short rasping breathes. With practice we can become more relaxed as we breathe down into the belly. This is easier to practice when we are laying down.

- Close your eyes and relax your body
- Notice your breath and imaging breathing into the chest area
- Now set the intention to send your next breath deep into your belly. It may help to place your hands on your belly and feel the rise and fall.

Just sit quietly for a few moments after you have finished and reflect on your practice how does it feel.

4-7-8 breathing

This technique forces the mind and body to focus on regulating the breath, rather than replaying worries and fear when we lay down at night, it can help to regulate the flight or fight response and improve sleep.

- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four.
- Hold your breath for a count of seven
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of eight.

Just sit quietly for a few moments after you have finished and reflect on your practice how does it feel.

Alternate nostril breathing

Simply by practising a few rounds of alternate nostril breathing (pranayama) for a few minutes each day, you can help unwind the mind and body – improve sleep – soothe your emotional state – calm your nervous system

Right now, you will be favouring either your left nostril or your right nostril when breathing. We don't breathe through them equally all the time.

Left nostril for calming – right nostril for energy:

Your nose is directly linked to your brain and nervous system.

Breathing in through your left nostril will access the right “feeling” hemisphere of your brain, and breathing in through your right nostril, will access the left “thinking” hemisphere of your brain. Consciously alternating your breath between either nostril will allow you to activate and access your whole brain.

- Close your right nostril and inhale through your left nostril
- Pause for a second
- Close left nostril and exhale through your right nostril
- Pause
- Inhale through right nostril
- Pause
- Close of right nostril and exhale through left
- Repeat

Just sit quietly for a few moments after you have finished and reflect on your practice how does it feel.