



4 - 7 - 8 Breath

Relaxation Exercise

This is a very simple and useful tool to achieve general relaxation and to manage stress. Based on the breath technique designed by Dr. Andrew Weil.

The 4-7-8 Breathing Exercise is simple, takes almost no time, requires no equipment and can be done anywhere.

When practiced over time it effects significant changes to the physiology – it lowers heart rate, it lowers blood pressure, it improves digestion. It is a very powerful anti-anxiety measure, in fact it is much more powerful than anti-anxiety drugs that are commonly prescribed.

Great for Sleep

Use it to help you fall asleep. Even one cycle can be enough to help you nod off

STEPS

- Ideally sit with your back straight
- Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge behind and above your front teeth and keep it there through the whole exercise
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of **4**
- Hold your breath for a count of **7**
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of **8**
- This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

How often?

Do it at least twice a day. You cannot do it too frequently. Do not do more than four breaths at one time for the first month of practice. Later, if you wish, you can extend it to eight breaths. If you feel a little lightheaded when you first breathe this way, do not be concerned - it will pass.

Are the numbers important?

How fast or slow you breathe for each cycle is not important; the ratio of 4:7:8 is important. If you have trouble holding your breath, speed the exercise up but keep to the ratio of 4:7:8 for the three phases. With practice you can slow it all down and get used to inhaling and exhaling more and more deeply