

5-10
Minute
Activity
For
Everyone

Breath Connection

When resting, an average person takes 12-20 breaths every minute, that adds up to 17,000 – 30,000 breaths per day. We usually go about our days unaware of our breathing practices, inhaling and exhaling without conscious thought. Your breath has a much greater impact on your body and the way you feel than most of us think. Here are three breathing activities for you and your family to expand your connection to your breath.

#1 – Bellows Breath

This breath technique is a great way to boost your energy and to raise alertness. Strive for 15 seconds on your first try to get used to this breath technique, then increase duration working up to one minute.

- Sit up tall with your back straight and shoulders relaxed.
- Begin inhaling and exhaling rapidly through your nose. Keep your mouth closed but relaxed. The in and out breaths should be equal in duration, but as short as possible. This technique is quite noisy.
- As you breathe you will notice quick movement of the diaphragm.

#3 – Counting the Breath

This breathing technique allows you to regain focus on your breath and have more intention behind your breathing. Start at building breaths to four seconds, you may increase the length of breath as you become more comfortable.

- Sit in a comfortable position with your back straight, close your eyes and take a few deep breaths in and out naturally.
- Now, inhale for a one second count.
- Exhale for a one second count.
- Inhale for a two second count.
- Exhale for a two second count.
- Continue increasing by one second per cycle until you are at four seconds.
- Repeat breathing cycle starting at one second and building to four seconds.
- Try to practice this breathing technique for 5-10 minutes.

#2 – Relaxing Breathing

This breathing technique is a natural tranquilizer for the nervous system. Begin with no more than four breathing cycles of this technique to get used to it. You may increase the amount of breathing cycles as you become more comfortable.

- Sit up tall with your back straight and shoulders relaxed.
- Place the tip of your tongue against the tissue behind your upper front teeth. Try to keep your tongue in place as you breathe.
- Inhale through your nose for four seconds.
- Hold your breath for seven seconds.
- Exhale through your mouth for eight seconds.
- Repeat breath cycle two or three more times.



Reflection Questions:

- How did your body feel both before and after using a breathing technique?
- What part of your body do you think needed it most?
- What long-term impacts do you think using breathing techniques can have?
- How can you use breathing techniques in your everyday life?