

When we're feeling stress or anxiety we may often find that our breath begins to become shallower and quicker. When we're relaxed for example when we sleep our breath becomes slower and deeper. These 4 different techniques aim to help your practice breath work to bring calm and relaxation no matter the situation or how long you have.

Box Breathing

This breathing technique will help you regulate your nervous system and induce feelings of calm.

1. Breathe in for 5 seconds through your nose, counting the breath in your head.
2. Hold this breath for 5 seconds.
3. Breathe out for 5 seconds, through your mouth, counting the breath in your head.
4. Repeat 5 times.

Increasing Energy

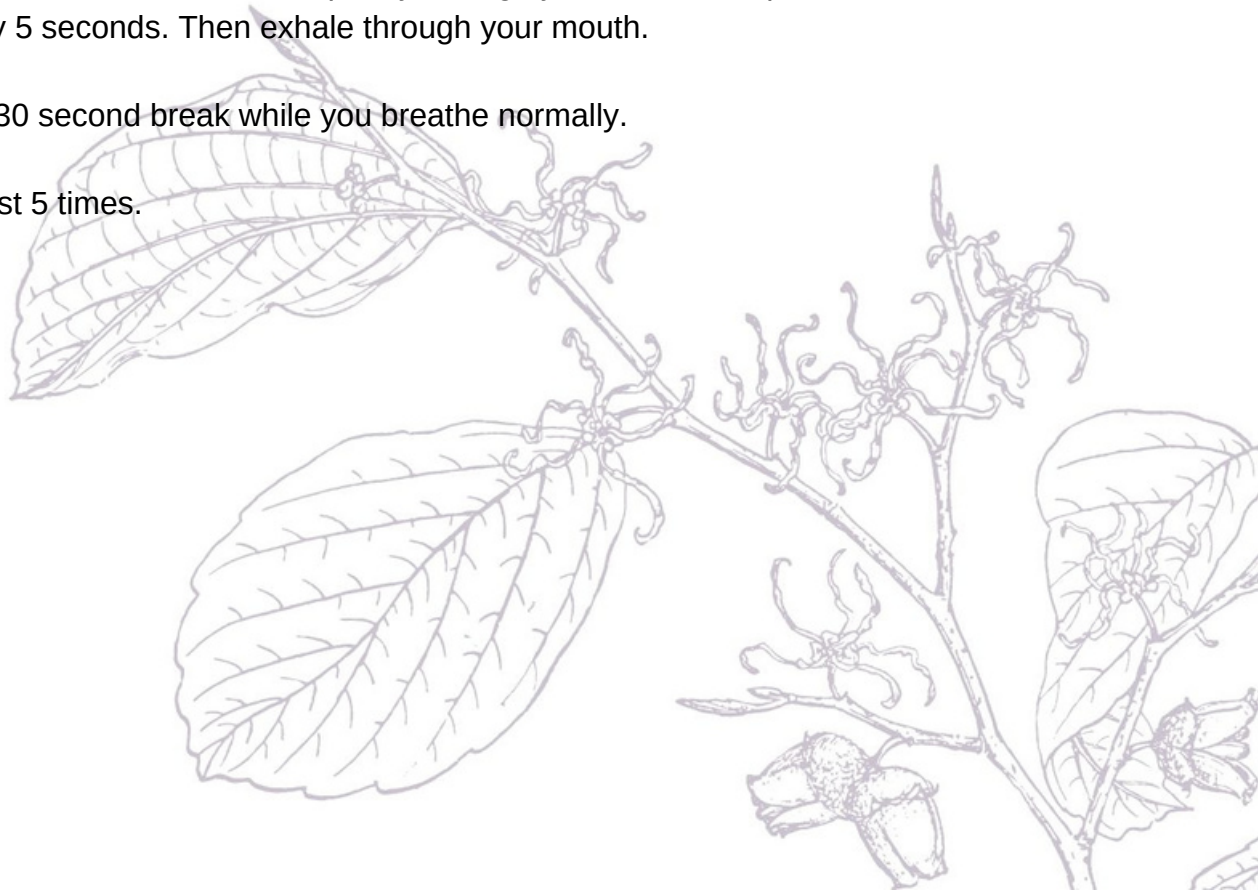
When we feel stressed it can cause us to feel tired and lack energy. This breathing technique helps to boost your energy levels.

Find a comfortable place to sit. It could be the floor or chair. Sit up tall, take a deep breath and as you breathe out allow your shoulders to relax and drop down.

Keep your mouth closed and inhale quickly through your nose with quick short breaths for approximately 5 seconds. Then exhale through your mouth.

Take a 15 to 30 second break while you breathe normally.

Repeat at least 5 times.





Deep Breathing Technique

Short shallow breaths when you feel stressed can zap your energy. This breathing technique can be used to help you learn to become more aware of your breathing so that you can adjust it during stressful situations.

Find yourself a quiet comfortable spot on the floor or sitting in a chair. Take a deep breath in and as you breathe out allow your shoulders to relax and drop down.

Breathe in through your nose.

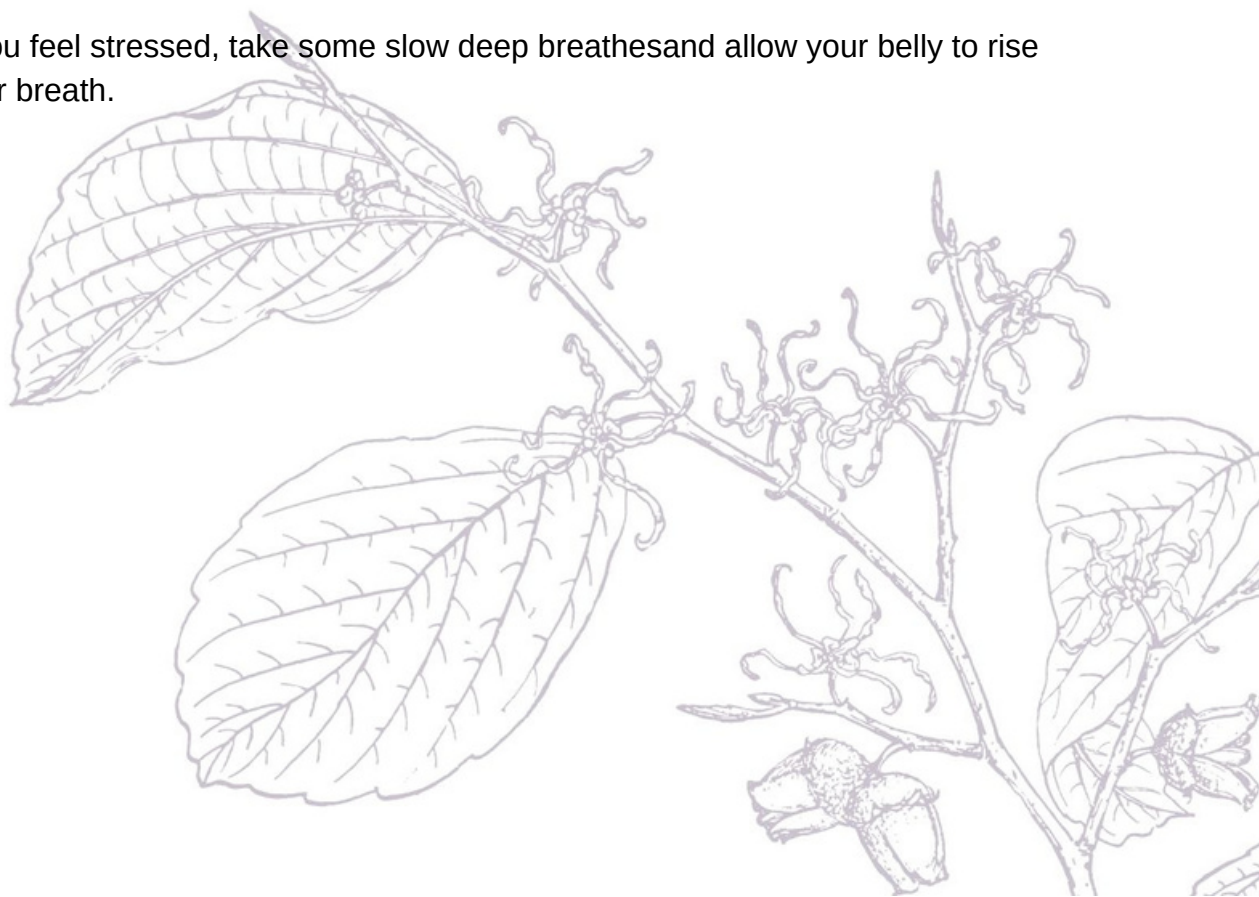
Place one hand on your tummy and the other hand on your chest.

As you breathe in, feel your belly rise and your chest expand. As you breathe out feel your belly lower.

The hand on your belly will move more than the one on your chest.

Take three more full, deep breaths. Notice how when you breathe deeply your belly rises and falls with your breath.

The next time you feel stressed, take some slow deep breathes and allow your belly to rise and fall with your breath.





Breathing for Meditation

Find a comfortable spot to sit either in a chair or on the floor with a cushion.

Close your eyes and focus your attention on your breathing. Let your chest and belly rise as you inhale and fall as you exhale. Notice where you feel your breaths in your lungs, your belly, your nostrils?

Bring your full attention to your breathing. Notice how rhythmic it is. Calm and steady.

After a few moments, your attention may begin to wander. This is natural and totally ok but if you notice this help yourself to refocus on your breathing by counting your breaths. Each in-breath and out-breath count 1, 2, 3...

Try this technique for 2-3 minutes initially and aim to build up to 5-10 minutes.

Before you open your eyes take time to notice how you feel. The physical sensations in your body and the mental ones in your mind.

This is meditation in its most simple form and will become easier the more you practice. Try not to become frustrated if you find it difficult at first, even just a few minutes of meditation will help you to become more relaxed and calm.

