

Relax Anywhere, Anytime

by 'Focusing on breathing'

Here are the basics about 'Focusing on Breathing': How, When & Where, and How does it help?

Visit www.countingbreaths.com for the details.

How can I 'Focus on breathing'?

Initially, practice all the following modes eyes open. When you get used to a mode, switch to doing it eyes closed, except for mode (E). Use both options as you like.

9 Years and above

(A) Finger Tips: Touch the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger. Breathe in, breathe out, **three times**, counting in the mind, during the out breaths. During the first out-breath, count 'one', second out-breath 'two', third out-breath 'three'. Repeat the 3 breaths, at each of the next 3 finger tips. When you get to the thumb, place the tip of the index finger at the base of the thumb and complete 3 breaths. Then switch to the other hand and repeat the process. Continue to practice, switching hands.

(B) Use finger segments (without counting): Every finger has 3 segments, separated by 2 lines. Keep the thumb tip at the top segment of the little finger. Breathe in and out, **one time**, without counting. Shift the thumb to the middle segment and complete one breath. Move to the bottom segment and complete one breath. Now, move the thumb tip to the next 3 fingers repeating the same steps. When you get to the thumb, use the tip of the index finger to touch the segments of the thumb. When all the fingers of the first hand are done, switch to the other hand and repeat the same practice. Practice as long as you like, switching hands. **Advanced mode:** When breathing in, lift the pointing finger tip off the segment. Touch it every time you breathe out.

(C) Count in the mind (without using the fingers): During every in-breath, feel the coolness in the nose, without counting. During every out-breath, slowly count in the mind: first out-breath - count 'o-n-e', second out-breath - 't-w-o-o' and so on. At some number, your mind wanders and you forget to count. Every time this happens, restart counting from 'o-n-e'.

Easier way is choose a target number below 10 (could be even 2 or 3), up to which your mind does not wander. When you reach that number, restart from 'o-n-e'. Do it anyway you like.

(D) Feel the breaths: During the in-breaths, feel the coolness inside the nose. During the out-breaths, feel the neutral or warm feeling in the nose. Don't use fingers. Don't count.

(E) Stare at a small spot, mark or thing: Select any small but prominently visible spot, mark or object, before you. While continuously staring at this target, practice any mode A / B / C / D.

(911) Breathe in through the nose, feeling the coolness. Breathe out gently through the mouth, with slightly open lips, focusing on the sensation in the lips. In this mode, the out-breath is controlled and long.

5-8 Year old children: It is similar to mode (A) but simpler. During the first breath (any time during the breath cycle) count in the mind 'o-n-e', during the second breath - count 't-w-o-o', and during the third breath - 't-h-r-e-e'. If you like, speak the numbers in low volume. Depending on the response of the child initially, ask him/her to breath only once at each finger. Gradually increase to twice and then to three breaths.

When Can I Practice and in What Mode?

Try all the suggested modes. Use whatever works for you. Feel free to modify and combine the modes.

To sleep: Everyone loves this time of practice. Initially use mode A. Then any mode A to D.

On waking up: Continue lying under the cover. Practice any mode.

Home: Walking, cooking, cleaning, gardening etc. do not require thinking. These are great opportunities for relaxing in any mode C to E / 911. See how many breaths it takes to toast bread, fill a cup, load the laundry and such repetitive activities.

Walking: Use mode C. While walking continuously, feel the coolness inside nose, during every in-breath. During every out-breath, every time a foot touches the ground, match it with the number being counted. Repeat the same number, till the out-breath is completed. After a little practice, you will be walking normally while practicing in this mode. After some time, you can practice even while running and on the treadmill!

Waiting (sitting or standing): Whenever you wait, you get bored and restless: for breakfast, lunch or dinner to be ready, computer to boot or web page to load, standing in a line, sitting at doctor's office etc. These are opportunities for mini relaxation. Practice any mode.

Traveling in Car / Bus / Air plane: Any mode.

Driving: Every stoppage at a red light is an opportunity for micro relaxation. Practice mode E with the red light as the target. Similar opportunities arise in a traffic jam and at the toll gate.

Work Place: Whenever you walk in the parking lot, hallway or work area, practice walking as described above. During work, whenever you lose concentration, mind wanders, any part of body feels tight or you feel tense, break for 2-3 minutes. Practice any mode.

Pain: Practice (911) mode 8 to 10 times if the pain is severe. For chronic pains, lie down on your back, relax the body and practice mode (A)/ (B) for prolonged periods of 30 to 45 minutes, to deeply relax the painful muscles and relieve the pains. Follow up soon with gentle stretching of those muscles while breathing in mode (D)/ (E)/ (911) Do this twice a day.

Playing games: When waiting for the ball to reach you, feeling frustrated or angry on losing, to refocus on the game etc., practice any mode.

Exercising: Practice on the tread mill in any mode A to E. When using weights or resistance training, breath out through the mouth, with a 'haa' during the strenuous movements. Breathe in, deeply, during the light return movement.

Under stress: When angry, anxious, panicky or in pain, use (911) mode, many times to get relief. Switch to other modes for a while and back to (911) till the crisis eases.

See the next 2 pages for variety of testimonials. Visit www.countingbreaths.com for the extensive feedback from practitioners, on how these practices help Mind, Body, Relationships and also relieve some Health problems.

Testimonials

2 years

"I have a 2 year old daughter who was not sleeping well at night. She would constantly toss and turn all night and come morning time when I would go in to wake her up, she was absolutely miserable. I was then introduced to the 'counting breaths' method. I tried it with my daughter. To my surprise the next day, I woke up a completely differently little girl.... or so it seemed. **She was much happier and more co-operative with me** than the previous mornings. I also tried this method with her time out if she misbehaves. Once again to my surprise it worked. **Within a few moments, she would become much calmer and more relaxed.**" Mother: Tara Wescott email: tekandy@aol.com

9-15 years

- * "I count my breaths when I am mad at my sister (4 year old), **so I don't punch her**" Boy 9 years.
- * "I count my breaths in car, in bed in the morning, and when in **angry mood**. It **prevents being car sick, get active and awake and calm down.**" Boy 9 years.
- * "I count my breaths before I go to bed. It **helps me fall asleep**" Girl 10 years.
- * "I count my breaths in bed, on the bus and when bored. It helps me in **calming myself when mad, in concentrating and when I get bored**" Girl 12 years.
- * "Counting my breaths **helps me think about things and not be bored.**" Boy 10 years.
- * "I count my breaths whenever I can. It **helps me in my anger, stress, study and concentration.**" Boy 13 years.

Adults

Anger: See comments above, from children 9-15 years. More reports in the web site.

Anxiety: See Dr. Padma Sripada's comments in the box on next page.

Concentration: "I came to know about your 'counting breaths' method from a brochure I found at the Albany Hindu Temple. I am preparing for USMLE exam due in August 09 and I am really tensed at the moment. I have been practicing the method since 2 days and I am really feeling very much relieved of my stress. And **I am able to concentrate better on my studies**" A student preparing for Medical Residency Exam in USA .

Dental Work: The mother of a 10 year old boy who attended my classes said "My son was terrified of getting any dental work done. I had to postpone his visits several times. After I learned 'Counting Breaths', I taught this method to him at home and made him practice for a few days. When he was sitting in the dentist's chair, I sat beside him and continuously said' "breathe, breathe ... '. For the first time, he had his **dental visit without the usual panic**".

Hypertension: A lady was regularly visiting her doctor for hypertension. Whenever she visited the doctor, her blood pressure was showing very high. She learned the relaxation methods in my classes and was determined to get over this problem. One day, she went to the doctor's office well ahead of time and practiced counting breaths for about 20 minutes. **For the first time, the doctor found her pressure normal.** She reported this with a beaming face. More reports are in the web site.

Insomnia: **This is the most common benefit. Children of 5 years to seniors, whoever tried it, are able to sleep easily.** See Dr. Sripada's comments in the box on the next page, on how it helped avoid medications for some insomniacs. Also see the special article: <http://www.countingbreaths.com/insomnia.html>

Job Stress: The principal and vice principal of a school, with about 1000 students, were feeling a lot of tension and harassment, from parents visiting them at school and pressing them for admissions, improvement of marks, etc. After they started practicing this method, their response to the situation totally changed. **They were able to listen to the parents patiently and send them off with a smile.**

Migraine

A person (male 53 years) was suffering from migraine every week, lasting for a day, since 30 years. He was bearing the pain without taking any medicine, as the pain relievers were making him drowsy. Within 2 months of practicing the method, his migraine totally stopped and did not recur even once in 6 months. **He initially practiced the method for mental comfort, without expecting any relief from migraine. This benefit came as a pleasant side effect! Many other reports are in the web site.**

Obesity

The senior librarian of the local library said he was practicing mostly at bed time and enjoyed good sleep. **He also lost 15 pounds.** Asked how it happened, he put both his index fingers at his temples, pointing to his head and said "It is all here!". More reports are in the web site.

Panic Attacks: See Dr. Sripada's comments in the box below.

Pains (Chronic): "I practiced the finger segment mode (B) last four days, for about 30 minutes. I do feel the benefits. **The pains are reduced immediately and stay that way, for a few hours.** I am also doing the light stretching exercises twice a day and they are helping me in healing the arthritic pains and also in sleeping through the night."

Quitting Smoking

"I was smoking a pack and half a day. I was introduced to the 'counting breaths' methods. After just a week of doing the method, once in the morning and right before bed, I was able to cut down smoking down to around 15 cigarettes a day from the previous 20 a day, by doing nothing more than the method. I now do it throughout the day and **I am down to about 4 cigarettes a day.** These are all due to doing the method: I am more relaxed and I don't need to lash out at everybody because I am edgy. The best part is, it costs me nothing to do, except for my effort into it. I didn't need any outside help like gum or patches; **I did it on my own which is a great feeling.** I highly recommend this for anyone of any age." - Michael S - mksmail800@verizon.net. More reports: <http://www.countingbreaths.com/annecdotes.html#Smoking>

Smiling Face

The non-smiling or grim faces of the practitioners gradually change to a softer and **happy smiling look**, over a few months. See reports and photos: <http://www.countingbreaths.com/annecdotes.html#Smile>

Stuttering

A 55 year old person was stuttering for more than 40 years. He practiced this method even while walking during his factory work and the morning walks. Within 2 months, his speech showed some improvement. In about 9 months, it was 90% normal. He said that his stuttering started when he was 15, due to fear of speaking to his father and grandfather .It continued for 40 years, even after he himself became a grandfather! **Practicing this method gradually dissolved that deeply embedded fear!**

Recommended by Doctors

"A simple, no expense, meditation-oriented approach to **stress reduction** which we recommend for all our patients (and ourselves!) is nicely presented at the following website: www.countingbreaths.com. Try it; you'll be glad you did!"

Peter Horvath MD, FACOG. Recommended in his web site 'www.albanyivf.com'

"The 'focusing on the breath' technique is appealing in its simplicity, and absence of restrictive conditions that often hamper the adoption of most techniques of meditation. I have introduced the technique to some of my patients with **anxiety, panic attacks, hypertension and insomnia.** Everyone who has adopted the technique has reported that it helps them relax. Some patients have reported it has helped them **sleep better, and no longer rely on medications.** The most remarkable effect was on a patient with **severe panic attacks**, who could not drive over a bridge without taking an anxiolytic medicine first. She is now able to drive over bridges **without relying on medications!**"

Padma Sripada MD Internal Medicine www.doctorpadma.com

If you have any questions see FAQ in www.countingbreaths.com. If you need help, contact: Suryanarayana Chennapragada
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You can download this brochure with the link: <http://countingbreaths.com/brochure-us.pdf>