

Relax Anywhere, Anytime

by 'Focusing on breathing'

Here are the basics of 'Focusing on breathing': How, When, Where, How does it help?

Visit www.countingbreaths.com for the details.

How can I 'Focus on breathing'?

Initially, practice these modes eyes open. When you become familiar, keep your eyes closed.

(A) Tip mode: Touch the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger. Breathe in, breathe out, **three times**, counting in the mind, while breathing out. 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 breathe 3 times. Then switch to the other hand and repeat the process. Continue the practice, switching hands.

(B) Segment mode: Every finger has 3 segments, separated by 2 lines. Place the tip of the thumb at the top segment of the little finger. Breathe in and out once, normally, **without counting**. Shift the thumb to the middle segment and breathe in and out. Move to the bottom segment and breathe in and out. Then repeat the same steps at the next 3 fingers. At the thumb, place the tip of the index finger on its segments and breathe in and out. Then switch to the other hand and repeat the same practice. Continue the practice switching hands. **Advanced mode:** While breathing in, lift the pointing finger off the segment and while breathing out, keep it touching.

(C) Counting mode: While breathing in, feel the coolness inside the nose. While breathing out, count **slowly** in the mind. First out-breath, count 'o-n-e', second out-breath, 't-w-o-o' and third out-breath, 'thre-e-e'. Then restart counting from 'o-n-e' and keep going, as long as you like. Every time you lose track of counting, restart from 'o-n-e'

(D) Feeling mode: While breathing in, feel the coolness inside the nose. While breathing out, feel the warm or no sensation inside the nose. Don't use fingers. Don't count.

(E) Staring mode: Select any small but prominently visible spot, mark or object, before you, as a target. While continuously staring at it, practice any of the above modes.

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

Children: For a few sessions, adults need to show them how to practice. Children from 9 years can practice all the above modes. Those from 5 – 8 years can practice modes (A) to (C). 4 year olds can practice the Tip mode (A). For younger ones, try this simplified version of mode (A). Ask the child to count 'one', any time during the first breath cycle, 'two' during the second breath cycle, and 't-h-r-e-e' during the third breath cycle. Initially, ask the child to breathe only once, at each finger. Gradually increase it to twice and then thrice.

When Can I Practice?

Lying in bed, to sleep: Great time for beginners. First, try the tip mode, then others.

As soon as you wake up in the morning: Practice any mode, lying under the cover. Change the body position to stretch arms and legs, bend the back etc. and hold each position for 10-20 breaths. Sit on the bed and breathe for some time. Stand on the floor and breathe for some time. Walk out of your room feeling fresh. Spend enough time in the morning to lay a strong foundation of relaxation to nullify the day's stresses.

Home: Walking, cooking, cleaning, gardening etc. do not require thinking. These are great opportunities for relaxing in any mode. See how many breaths it takes for the repetitive activities like toasting the bread, filling the cup, loading the laundry.

Walking: To develop this practice, use the counting mode (C) and walk slowly. While breathing in, feel the coolness inside nose. While breathing out: every time a foot touches the ground, match it with the number being counted, repeating the same number, till the out-breath is completed (as an example: during the first out- breath, one, one, one so on)..After some practice, walk at normal pace. In a few months, you can practice even while running!

Waiting (sitting or standing): Whenever you wait, you get bored and restless - for breakfast, lunch or dinner to be ready, computer to load, standing in a line, sitting at the 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 the staring mode (E) staring at the red light. Similar opportunities arise in a traffic jam and the toll gate.

Work Place: Whenever you walk in the parking lot, hallway or work area, practice walking as described above. Whenever you lose concentration, mind wanders, any part of body feels tight or you feel stressed, break for 1-2 minutes and practice any mode.

Pain: Practice (911) mode 8 to 10 times, if the pain is acute. For chronic pains, lie down on your back, let the body go loose, and practice the tip/ segment mode for prolonged periods of 30 to 45 minutes. This will deeply relax the painful muscles, partly relieve the pains and lets them heal. Follow up with gentle and slow stretching of the affected muscles, using your choice mode. Breathe in while stretching and breathe out, while closing or bending.

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

Exercising: Practice on the tread mill in any mode (A) to (D). When doing 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 the (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. 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." Another report: "These breathing techniques have helped me sleep at night and **reduced my Fibromyalgia pains** that I have been suffering since last 19 years. Now I am able to do my chores at home like vacuuming and also drive after a gap of many years!"

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. Within 2 months, his speech showed some improvement. In about 9 months, it was 90% normal. He said that his stuttering started

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. So me 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 (Short name – CS) Ph# (W) 518-391-2889. E-mail: csrao1003@gmail.com

Download this brochure with the link: <http://countingbreaths.com/brochure.pdf>

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