

How to Quit Smoking by 'Focusing on Breathing'

How can I do it?

Tip mode: Touch the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger. Breathe in and out *three times* normally, counting in the mind, every time you breathe 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 are at the thumb, place the tip of the index finger at the base of the thumb and breathe 3 times. Now switch to the other hand and repeat the same practice. Continue practicing switching the hands.

Segment mode: Every finger has 3 segments, separated by 2 cross lines. Place the tip of the thumb at the top segment of the little finger. Breathe in and out once. Repeat this at each of the three segments of all the five fingers. When you get to the thumb, touch the tip of the index finger to its segments. Now switch to the other hand and repeat the same steps. Continue practicing, switching hands.

Counting mode: While breathing in normally, feel the *faint 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'. Now repeat the same cycle. Count 'o-n-e' during the next out-breath and so on. Continue the practice as long as you like. Every time you lose focus on breathing or counting, get back to the practice, by counting 'o-n-e' during the next out-breath.

Staring mode: Select a 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 mode: Breathe in through the nose or mouth quickly. Breathe out gently through the mouth, with your lips only slightly open. Focus on the sensation at the lips and the bulging cheeks while breathing out. In this mode, the out-breath is slow and long.

When can I practice this technique?

Lying in bed, trying to get sleep: Use the segment mode when you are in bed and wish to sleep. No more insomnia!

On waking up: Use the segment mode or counting mode as soon as you are awake. Continue till you feel fresh and then leave the bed.

Waiting: Wherever you wait, use any of the above modes, rather than feeling bored or impatient - stuck in traffic, standing in a line, sitting at the doctor's office, waiting for the computer program to load....so on. No more smoking because you are bored!

Work Place: Whenever you lose concentration, your mind wanders, any part of body feels tight or you feel stressed out, take a breathing break, using any of the modes. Break that stress cycle in just a minute or two!

Under stress and when a strong urge to smoke arises: Practice the 911 mode or staring mode. Try this when angry, anxious, panicky till you regain control over yourself. Alternate the 911 with any of the other modes.

Success stories

- *"I was smoking a pack and half a day. Within a week of practicing 'counting breaths', in the morning and right before bed, I was able to cut down smoking down to around 15 cigarettes a day, without any other aids. I now do it throughout the day and I am down to about 4 cigarettes a day."*
- *"When my craving for a cigarette begins, instead of reaching into my pocket for a smoke, I breathe 3 times at each finger tip. Within a few minutes not only did the craving stop, but I feel more energized."*
- *"I was smoking for more than 15 years and almost 1 pack a day, for last 5 years. Nicotine patches were not effective. Chantix medication caused severe sleep disturbance. I met CS and learned the 'focusing on breathing' techniques in his classes. Whenever I have the urge to smoke, at my office, I stare at a character on my computer screen and practice the 'counting mode' In 2-3 minutes, the urge disappears. I was able to cut down the smoking habit to 4 – 6 cigarettes a day within 2 months. I finally stopped completely after another month. I am now smoke free!"*

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