

How to Quit Smoking by ‘Focusing on Breathing’

‘Focusing on breathing’ habit weakens the urge to smoke. The smoking rate comes down and one day, you will quit.

How can I ‘focus on the breathing’?

Tip mode: Touch the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger. Breathe in and out *three times*, counting in the mind, every time you breathe out. Repeat the 3 breaths, at each of the next 3 finger tips. 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 three times. Repeat breathing three times at each of the segments of the other fingers. At the thumb, place the tip of the index finger at its segments. Now switch to the other hand and repeat the same steps. Continue practicing, switching hands. *Triple segment mode: Breathe three times at each segment, everything else remaining same.*

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.

Sandwich mode (Breathing and smoking alternately): Practice the ‘tip mode’ only at the little finger. Light the cigarette. Take a single puff and stop. Breathe three times again as before. Take a single puff again. Repeat this sandwich pattern of breathing and single puffing, till the cigarette is fully done or you lose the urge to smoke and throw the remaining cigarette away. When you become comfortable with this mode, upgrade to breathing at two fingers, (the little and ring fingers) before every single puff, everything else remaining same as above. Next stage, is to upgrade to three fingers, then four and five. Finally to both hands.

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. Make this a habit.

On waking up: Use the segment mode or counting mode, as soon as you are awake. Continue lying in the bed and breathe for some time, in each of these body positions – on your back, on your chest, turned left and turned right. Feel fresh and then leave the bed. Make this a habit.

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! Make this a habit.

When you feel the urge to smoke: Try any of the above modes you like. See the success stories below.

When smoking: Practice the sandwich mode.

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!"*
- **See more success stories at <http://countingbreaths.com/fob/relax/benefits#smoking> (*)**

Suryanarayana Chennapragada (Short name – CS) trains adults and children in simple and practical mindbody techniques for Relaxation, Stress management and Meditation. Convenient times and affordable charges.

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