

Breathing

Breathing techniques have been used to assist control of the mind for thousands of years. They can be powerful and should not be easily dismissed.

When you are experiencing anxiety or anger, you are seldom breathing completely. Your breaths will most likely be quick and shallow. The connection is so strong that if you choose to breathe quickly, failing to get full, deep breaths, you will likely start experiencing anxiety. Your breathing will be creating anxiety. Anxiety results in shallow breathing; shallow breathing creates the experience of anxiety.

In my years of practice, there are several breathing techniques that I have found helpful for decreasing anxiety and anger.

Heart Breath

1. Focus your attention on the area around your heart. Place your hand in the center of your chest to keep your focus on this area.
2. Breathe deeply but normally, visualizing that your breath is coming in and out of your heart.
3. Activate a positive feeling as you breathe through your heart. The feeling of appreciation is a good place to start. You may also find it beneficial to experience the love you have for a significant other.

Heart and Solar Plexus Breath

1. Focus attention on both your heart and your solar plexus (abdomen).
2. Breathe deeply but normally, visualizing that your breath is coming in through your heart and out through your solar plexus.
3. Activate a positive feeling as you continue to breathe into your heart and out of your solar plexus.

Combination Deep Breathing and Brain Connection

This technique combines deep breathing with some touch that appears to synchronize the hemispheres of the brain.

1. Begin your deep breathing with any technique that works for you.
2. Continue with your breathing, place two fingers of each hand on your temples. Use very light pressure (almost no pressure). Hold that position for at least 30 seconds.
3. Then place one hand, palm down, on your forehead while placing the other hand, palm down on the part of the head that contains the occiput (just barely above where the neck meets the head). Again, keep the pressure light. Hold this position for at least 30 seconds.
4. Now clasp your hands together and hold them both on the same area (just below the occiput) with hardly any pressure. Hold this position for at least 30 seconds.
5. It always helps to generate positive feelings when you are practicing any breathing technique.

Full Breathing

In this practice, there are three areas of concentration; the heart (chest), the solar plexus (abdomen) and the shoulders

1. Place one hand on your abdomen and the other on your chest.
2. Breathe in and out of the solar plexus area while keeping the chest stable.
3. Once you have enough practice with solar plexus breathing, start breathing in such a way that only the chest area is moving and the abdomen is stable.
4. After these experiences are accurate, begin breathing into and out of your shoulders; keeping chest and abdomen stable.
5. When you are ready, begin to breathe with all three areas. Breathe into your abdomen and allow the breath to flow into your chest and shoulders. Begin the exhaling process from your shoulders, moving through your chest to your abdomen.

Alternate Nostrils

This method allows you to break thought patterns that you can't seem to escape. It is fine to use your fingers on the outside of your nostrils to ensure success.

1. Breathe in and out of one nostril. Hold the other nostril closed with your finger on the outside.
2. When you have finished one cycle of inhalation and exhalation, close that nostril and breathe through the other.
3. Continue the practice until you feel unstuck. You may feel some confusion at first and this may create a desire to stop the practice. Don't. Continue in this pattern until you can no longer think about the problem for which you originated the practice.