

Breathing technique 7/11

The relaxing breathing technique is called so because it simply requires that you breathe in for a count of 7 and out for a count of 11. However that all gets a bit busy so just remember that as long as you are breathing out for longer than you breathe in you are doing what is needed.

What does breathing out longer than you breathe in achieve?

The breath is aligned to the two main parts of the nervous system:-

- Sympathetic – which governs the parts of your body that need to be activated if there is any danger about or that needs an immediate response to. The sympathetic system is designed to be more active during the day and as an alignment with the in breath.
- Para-sympathetic – this governs the parts of your body that calms everything down and brings the body rest and relaxation. The para-sympathetic is designed to govern the body more at night and as more of an alignment with the out breath.

You will have seen people who are in a panic or worried and they tend to gulp in air as they get more upset. In contrast a person who is relaxed

It does not matter how busy your head is, breathing out longer than you breathe in forces the body to activate calming responses.

Practice makes perfect

Taking time out to practice this breathing regularly 'anchors' the relaxation response. This means that your body gets used to quickly creating the relaxation response when you start to breathing this way.

1. start by sitting in a place where you will not be disturbed and practice for about 10 minutes
2. put your hand on your stomach just below your navel. And make sure that your breathing is not all in the chest but that your hand slightly rises when you breathe in to show that you are doing relaxed breaths that make this area move as well as the chest. (Your lungs go a long way down into the body and most of us just breathe into a small percentage of them.) This is not about taking huge breath's more that there is a normal breath which moves the stomach and the outward breath is longer.
3. following this you can
 - a. listen to a relaxing CD or hypnotic induction to deepen the relaxation response
 - b. go through an imaginary journey of relaxing the body, like imagining the warm rays of the sun gradually flowing into the body from tip top toe. Or imagining with every breath one part of the body gets heavier.
4. after a few weeks you will not have to count as your body will naturally remember the rhythm.