



## Stress Relief Exercises

.....breathe

Simple techniques like this controlled breathing exercise can help whenever you feel your stress levels soaring. This can be effective in dealing with anxiety and panic attacks as well. Taking a restorative pause to focus on your breathing can also be a valuable anger management tool.

Here are the steps for the controlled breathing exercise:

1. Sit upright in a comfortable position. Focus on your present state and existence (often termed being “mindful”).
2. Begin breathing through your nostrils. Inhale slowly for five counts; fill your lower abdomen with air.
3. To the count of five, exhale slowly through your mouth.
4. Repeat this exercise for about two minutes. Gradually you will be able to build up to ten counts or higher. Increase your relaxation by imagining a peaceful scene or breathing in fresh air or pleasant smells.

### Clearing your Head and Neck Tension

1. Begin with several very slow neck rolls. With your chin on your chest, or close to it, roll your head up and to the right, slowly inhaling until your head is leaning back and your chin is pointing toward the sky. If you have arthritis of the neck (cervical spine) or other disease of the spine, do not point your chin to the sky.
2. Hold your breath for just a few seconds in this position.
3. As you roll your head down, slowly exhale until your chin is back on your chest.
4. Repeat, this time rolling your head to the left.

