



"Mini" Relaxation Exercises

Mini relaxation exercises are focused breathing techniques which help reduce anxiety and tension immediately.

Your breath is with you at every moment in time.

You can do them with your eyes open or closed (but make sure that your eyes are open when you are driving!). You can do them any place, at any time; no one will know that you are doing them!!

For all versions, be sure you are using belly breathing (diaphragmatic breathing):

- ✓ Breathe in through your nose and out through your nose or mouth.
- ✓ You should feel your stomach rising about an inch as you breathe in, and falling about an inch as you breathe out.
- ✓ If this is difficult for you, try laying on your back or stomach- you will be more aware of your breath.
- ✓ Remember, it is impossible to breathe diaphragmatically if you are holding your stomach in! So...relax you stomach muscles.

Good times to "do a mini"...

- while being stuck in traffic or at a red light
- when put on "hold" during an important phone call
- while waiting in your doctor's waiting room
- when someone says something which bothers you
- when you feel overwhelmed by what you need to accomplish in the near future
- while standing in line...when in pain...etc., etc.

Four "Mini" Relaxation Exercises



Mini Version 1: 10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1

- Count very slowly to yourself from ten down to zero, one number for each out breath.
(For instance, with the first diaphragmatic breath, you say "ten" to yourself,; with the next breath, you say "nine", etc.)
- If you start feeling light-headed or dizzy, slow down the counting.
- When you get to "zero", see how you are feeling.
- If you are feeling better, great! If not, try doing it again.



Mini Version 2: Inhale 1-2-3-4 Exhale 4-3-2-1

- As you inhale, count very slowly up to four; as you exhale, count slowly back down to one.
- Do this several times (*for instance, as you inhale, you say to yourself "one, two, three, four," as you exhale, you say to yourself "four, three, two, one."*)



Mini Version 3: Inhale, pause- 1,2,3 Exhale, pause, 1,2,3

- After each inhalation, pause and count 1,2,3 (breath is held in)
- After you exhale, pause and count 1,2,3
- Do this for several breaths.



Mini Version 4 Inhale "I AM " Exhale "AT PEACE"

- On the IN breath, you think "I AM"
- On the OUT breath, you think "AT PEACE"