

IMMUNITY LESSON 8

Measured Breathing Calms Your Brain



Do you need a quick flotation device to depend on when it feels like you are overwhelmed and almost drowning in a stormy sea of stressful items at work, at home, or when something comes out of the blue? When you finally are aware that the stress just doesn't feel good?

Better Sleep and *Better Attitude* will lower your levels of stress, but there will be times when the ocean of life becomes a bit stormy, nonetheless. What can one do in the moment? We have one simple solution that has been proven since ancient times to work very well to calm our brains immediately.

Measured Breathing

This simple technique has been used for centuries to relax one's mind and invoke parasympathetic (recovery) activation. It's often employed during restorative exercises like yoga. It essentially sends messages to the body and brain that tells the body we are in *recovery mode*, the very message we need at peak times of stress.

SLOW, DEEP BELLY BREATHS: Inhale *slowly* and *gently* through your nose to a count of four, pause, exhale slowly

to a count of five. Pause. Repeat. This tells your body you are in recovery mode vs. stress mode. You can lightly close your eyes and focus on your breath as the air passes through your nostrils.

Try it now.

- Lightly close your eyes.
- Focus on the air moving through your nose.
- Very slowly (4 seconds) take a very gentle full breath in so that your belly noticeably distends.
- Pause.
- Slowly and fully exhale to a count of 5 while continuing to focus on your breathing through your nose.
- Repeat 3-5 times.

Breathing + Stretching

Once you have it down, combine measured breathing with other stretching routines. Practice measured breathing before combining for best results.

Stretch while at work by spreading your toes and fingers as much as possible and hold for 10 seconds. Stretch with your arms over and behind your head. Stand and position your body so that you feel stretches in your legs and back. There is no wrong way.

You can experiment and feel the wonders stretching and measured breathing work, alone and in combination. Especially useful if acutely stressed, but also works as a routine.

Keep up the work on sleep and attitude while incorporating breathing and stretching into your life.

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Next Up Tomorrow

HABIT CHANGE MADE SIMPLE. We are building the foundation, one step at a time. You are the hero of this story; we are just the guide. Together we can enhance our immune system by taking one step at a time.

Today's #1 Task •••••

Practice measured breathing as above several times today. Feel how much more relaxed you are after several measured breaths. Practice so you will be able to implement Task # 2 when the time inevitably comes to rescue yourself.



JOY'S PEARL

"Measured Breathing + Stretching will relax you like never before. Try it. You'll be amazed."

Today's #2 Task •••••

Combine measured breathing and simple stretching when you need that quick flotation device when you are overwhelmed and feel as if you are drowning in the stormy sea of life.

