



BREATHE

We all know how to breathe, but getting the most from each breath during a stressful time can relax your muscles, decrease your heart rate, and eventually lower your blood pressure. Try different techniques when you have the time (and space) to do so. As you become more comfortable with these exercises (or other exercises that help you relax), incorporate them into your everyday routines.

Breath Counting

- Sit up straight or lay down.
- Take normal, deep breaths.
- Feel your stomach rise and fall as you breathe.
- Each time you breathe out, count a breath.
- Count 10 breaths in a row. If you miss one, start over.
- When you get to 10, repeat.
- Focus on your breathing and block out all other thoughts.

**Repeat as
Necessary**

CBT?

CBT or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is based on the idea that **thoughts** cause our feelings and behaviors, **not** external things, i.e. not things, people, or situations outside of ourselves.

Common strategies include:

- Rational self-counseling skills are learned
- Uses the Socratic Method, i.e. asking lots of questions to get you thinking
- Based on an educational model, emphasizing how and why;
- Inductive methods, i.e. looking for facts; and,
- Homework is a central feature thus allowing for practice and mastery between sessions.

The Basics:

A = Activating event

B= Beliefs

C=Consequences

D=Dispute

E= Effective new belief or emotional consequence.

Exchange Vocabulary:

- When you think, "Must," try thinking, "Prefer."
- When you think, "Guilt," try thinking, "Remorse."
- When you think, "Should," try thinking, "Choose to."

What are some other thoughts you have? What is the exchange?

(NREPP, 2009; VanScoyoc & Christophersen, 2005)



Coping Strategies!

- * Positive Self-Talk
- * Simplify your life.
- * Be self-aware: plan time for your- self. After all, "*if you fail to plan, you plan to fail!*"
- * ASK for what you need, and
- * Delegate!
- * Avoid "can't" when you really mean "won't."
- * Time manage.
- * Learn to say, "No!" You CAN say, "I'll get back to you," and buy yourself time to think.
- * You can also say, "No!" by saying YES to something else.
- * Develop and implement an "Attitude of Gratitude!"
- * Eat nutritiously. Sleep 8 hours a night!
- * Try something new.

Helpful Self-Statements:

1. I know I can do this!
2. Keep breathing! IN through my nose and s-l-o-w-l-y OUT through my mouth.
3. One step at a time. CALM DOWN!
4. This is difficult. Each step I take is a step forward.



- * Look at your expectations. Are they reasonable?
- * Deal with problems as they appear.
- * Let GO!
- * Make time for fun!
- * Nurture and maintain supportive relationships.



AVOID!

Should; Ought; Must; Have to...

One-Liners

- * Acceptance is the key to serenity.
- * AAA = Awareness Acceptance Action (What's the issue? Where do I stand in relation to it? What can I do?)
- * How Important Is It? (Do I really need to go to every conflict I am invited to?)
- * MYOB = Mind Your Own Business (I have enough to focus on without getting involved in other people's stuff.)
- * Listen and Learn (I don't have to agree; just listen and come to a place of understanding.)
- * Is it kind? Is it important? Is it necessary? (Nine little words that help me think before speaking.)
- * Keep An Open Mind
- * Easy Does It (Slow down; take it easy; smell the coffee. Will it matter a month from now?)
- * Act as if... or Fake it till you make it.
- * Let It Go! (If it's not yours, let it go.)
- * Keep the Focus On Me (I have enough to do just to take care of myself. Model this and note the benefits to others.)
- * Live and Let Live. (Accepting others and accepting self eliminates stress and develops compassion.)
- * Stay in the Now: the Present is a gift I give myself. (Past is history; Future hasn't been written.)
- * KISS: Keep It Simple Sweetie
- * First Things First (Priorities help achieve results)
- * One Day at a Time (It's all we really have so make the most of it.)

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