

Lets Practice Diaphragmatic Breathing

Diaphragmatic breathing, or deep breathing from the diaphragm rather than the chest, is a great way to relax and reduce anxiety.

How to practice diaphragmatic breathing

1. Find a quiet place free of distractions. Lie on the floor or recline in a chair, loosen any tight clothing and remove glasses or contacts. Rest your hands in your lap or on the arms of the chair.
2. Place one hand on your upper chest and the other hand on your stomach. Inhale, taking a deep breath from your abdomen as you count to three. As you inhale you should feel your stomach rise up. The hand on your chest should not move.
3. After a short pause of a 2 count, slowly exhale while counting to six.
4. Your stomach should fall back down as you exhale.
5. Continue this pattern of rhythmic breathing for five to ten minutes.

Revised by C. Morin from McMaster University. Guided Relaxation CD.