

MY LIFE-FIT HABITS Deep Breathing

What is **anxiety**?

Anxiety is an emotion that we all experience. It can mean that you are scared or worried, it is a signal that there is danger. Sometimes we have false alarms, when our bodies feel scared when there is no real danger.

What is **deep breathing**?

Deep Breathing is a relaxation technique performed by purposefully taking slow, deep breaths. When practiced regularly, deep breathing provides both immediate and long-term relief from stress and anxiety.

Why should I try **deep breathing**?

During anxiety, our body changes and our breathing becomes shallow and rapid, our heart rate increases and muscles become tense. Breathing deeper and slower helps the symptoms of anxiety fade away.

How can I relax using **deep breathing**?

1. Place one hand on your stomach and one hand on your chest. Imagine you have a balloon in your stomach and you want to blow it up really big. This means you have to push the air you breathe in all the way down to your stomach.
2. Slowly breathe in through your nose, counting to 3, "blowing up the balloon" in your stomach. Your chest should not move. Watch to see that only your hand on your stomach goes up as you "fill the balloon with air."
3. Hold your breath while you keep the balloon filled with air and say RELAX to yourself
4. Slowly breathe out through your nose counting to 3. The balloon in your stomach will get smaller when you breathe out, and the hand on your stomach will go down
5. Hold your breath and say RELAX to yourself
6. Try and do this five times.

Try this Life-Fit **Deep Breathing Challenge**

Start your day with three slow, deep breaths before you hop out of bed. End each day with three slow, deep breaths before you go to sleep.

When you notice you feel anxious or stressed, use three slow, deep breaths.

Ask your parents to take a look at this **helpful** app:

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/reachout-breathe/id985891649?mt=8>

How to get extra help to **boost** your health and well-being

Try our other tip sheets. Speak to your parents, your teachers, your counsellor or another important adult you trust.

Try these support websites:

www.au.reachout.com
www.eheadspace.org.au

www.youthbeyondblue.com
<http://www.brave-online.com/>

