



## Relaxing the Tension Away

*"In the space between 2 breaths we have true inner peace."*

Blake Beattie

The way you breathe affects your whole body. Full, deep breathing is a good way to reduce tension, feel relaxed, and reduce stress. Deep breathing increases brain function by providing richer oxygen stores, and has a cleansing effect on the whole body.

### Roll breathing

The object of roll breathing is to develop full use of your lungs and get in touch with the rhythm of your breathing. It can be practiced in any position, but it is best to learn it lying on your back, with your knees bent.

1. Place your left hand on your abdomen and your right hand on your chest. Notice how your hands move as you breathe in and out.
2. Practice filling your lower lungs by breathing so that your left hand goes up when you inhale and your right hand remains still. Always inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
3. When you have filled and emptied your lower lungs 8 to 10 times, add the second step to your breathing: inhale first into your lower lungs as before, and then continue inhaling into your upper chest. As you do so, your right hand will rise and your left hand will fall a little as your abdomen falls.
4. As you exhale slowly through your mouth, make a quiet, whooshing sound as first your left hand and then your right hand falls. As you exhale, feel the tension leaving your body as you become more and more relaxed.
5. Practice breathing in and out in this manner for 3 to 5 minutes. Notice that the movement of your abdomen and chest is like rolling waves rising and falling in a rhythmic motion.

Practice roll breathing daily for several weeks until you can do it almost anywhere, providing you with an instant relaxation tool any time you need one.

- **Caution:** Some people get dizzy the first few times they try roll breathing. If you begin to hyperventilate or become light-headed, slow your breathing.

## **Meditation**

Two meditation techniques are most commonly used: concentrative and mindful. In concentrative meditation, you focus on a single image, sound, mantra (words spoken or sung in a pattern), or your own breathing. Mindful meditation does not focus on a single purpose; rather, you are aware of all thoughts, feelings, sounds, or images that pass through your mind. Meditation usually involves slow, regular breathing and sitting quietly for 15 to 20 minutes.

## **Imagery for releasing muscle tension**

Guided imagery (visualization) is a method of using your imagination to help you relax and release tension caused by stress. Your body responds to the images in your mind. Use these simple imagery exercises for relaxing or renewing your energy when you need to relax. Close your eyes and imagine one of the following images:

- Wax softens and melts.
- A tight, twisted rope slowly unwinds.
- Tension swirls out of your body and down the drain.
- You hold a remote control and turn down the volume on your muscle tension.
- Take a 10 minute mini-vacation in your mind. Imagine the sounds, smells, feelings and sights.

## **Avoiding Unnecessary Stress**

Since stress is unavoidable in life, it is important to find ways to decrease the negative effects of stress. Your breath is one of the easiest, yet most powerful ways to decrease tension. It's true what they say: 'Breathe and achieve.'

## ***Written by Blake Beattie***

Blake is a director of Inspire Consulting and the Life Changing Experiences Foundation. Through coaching, speaking and training, Blake has provided long term, sustainable solutions to a number of different organisations throughout Australia, America, Canada and New Zealand. Myers, Telstra, the Australian Swimming Team and Community Aid Abroad are just some of the organisations that have benefited from Blake's work over the last few years.

Blake is a qualified teacher, actor, timeline therapist and NLP practitioner and is currently completing a Masters Degree in Business Administration. He has been a National Speakers Showcase finalist and was nominated for the Yale World Fellowship Program. Blake has managed highly successful teams, has spoken to audiences of up to 15,000 people in a day and has featured on Australian radio and television. Blake recently spoke aboard the Sapphire Princess, the largest passenger ship to ever come to Sydney and was also awarded the Summit Leadership Award presented at Parliament House.



Blake delivers results. He is a dynamic and passionate speaker who connects with any audience to increase productivity and improve performance. For your next conference or event make sure you choose a speaker that provides lasting sustainable change – look no further than Sydney born speaker Blake Beattie.