

Mindfulness Meditation & Breathwork

HEALTH & WELLNESS



What is it and why do I care?

Mindfulness meditation is a practice that teaches you to slow down your racing thoughts, let go of negativity, and calm both your mind and body. It is often coupled with breathwork that can help reduce blood pressure, improve sleep, boost the immune system, and release stress hormones from your body. They are effective strategies for preventing and managing the stress and burnout which so often plague both nursing students and practicing nurses.

Four techniques to try...

Box/Square Breathing (anxiety relief)

Box or square breathing involves breathing in, holding the breath, exhaling, and holding it again — all for four counts apiece. The cycle is repeated for several minutes. You can trace the shape of a box to improve your focus. This exercise promotes relaxation and leads to clearer thoughts, helping to level out emotional peaks and valleys. (Video Link: <https://youtu.be/tEmt1Znux58>)

Dynamic Breathing, a.k.a. The Chicken Breath (to increase energy)

The way we inhale and exhale is integrally linked to every system in our body. Use dynamic breathing to take conscious control of your breathing system to bring about energetic changes across your whole body. It will help ease performance nerves and help regulate your heart rate and improve circulation. It looks silly, but it works! (Video Link: <https://youtu.be/ScfG3JS6ZSI>)

Paced Breathing (improve focus & reduce stress)

This deep, paced breathing exercise helps to clear your mind of distracting thoughts, increase your focus, and activate your body's relaxation responses. If you're still struggling to focus, you can add a hand motion, like tapping your fingers to your thumb in a regular pattern. (Video Link: <https://youtu.be/QWJtWfSSTi4>)

Mindful Breathing (clear the mind)

The seemingly simple task of mindful breathing is a great bridge for transitioning from one task to another. The practice involves trying to keep your mind focused on ONLY the physical process of inhaling and exhaling. When your mind wanders, which it always does, bring it back gently but firmly. (Video Links: 1 minute: <https://youtu.be/cEqZthCaMpo> or 5 minute: https://youtu.be/pB_qUY1dPrs)

Want More?

Websites

- Headspace - <https://www.youtube.com/@headspace/about>
- Dr. Jenna Bauer - <https://www.youtube.com/@dr.jennabauer-empoweredmin7564/about>
- Tiny Buddha - <https://tinybuddha.com/>

Apps

- Headspace
- TaoMix
- Calm
- BetterSleep