

Learn to Relax

Deep breathing is a simple relaxation technique to employ when trying to manage stress. You can sit or stand to do this anywhere – at anytime. By inhaling deeply you allow your lungs to take in as much oxygen as possible, and this begins to relieve the tension that can lead to negative stress. Try to practice this technique for a few minutes 3 to 4 times a day, or whenever you feel tense.

The 3 Minute Relaxation Technique

The following is a breathing technique that can be used anytime and anywhere to help you relax.

1. STOP what you are doing - sit down or lean against something
2. Focus on your watch's second hand
3. Breathe OUT
4. Don't breathe in for 10 seconds
5. Breathe IN for 3 seconds, then OUT for 3 seconds (Be sure to use your watch to time your breathing)
6. Repeat the 3 second breathing pattern for 1 minute.

I learned this simple technique from a Clinical Psychologist in Australia. I've used this on many occasions without anyone noticing! It really does work! Remember, stress is a normal part of life. The key to successful stress management is to recognise your individual stressors and learn how to manage them.

Jacqueline Crighton, MSc