



## Mini Breathing Exercises

The following breathing exercises are designed to help reduce anxiety and tension. Try one when you're feeling stressed or when:

- you're stuck in traffic
- you can't sleep
- someone says something that bothers you
- you're at the dentist
- you feel overwhelmed by what you need to accomplish
- you get nervous right before a presentation

Close your eyes if you are able and comfortable doing so. Inhale slowly through your nose, filling your belly and then your chest with a deep breath. Exhale slowly through your mouth and feel the air leave your chest and then your belly. Do this several times and try these variations.

### Exercise #1

Count very slowly to yourself from ten down to zero, one number for each breath. Thus, with the first complete inhalation and exhalation, you say "ten" to yourself, with the next, "nine", etc. Repeat as necessary.

### Exercise #2

As you inhale, say to yourself, "one, two, three, four", as you exhale, say, "four, three, two, one". Do this several times.

### Exercise #3

After you inhale, pause for a few seconds. After you exhale, pause again for a few seconds. Do this several times.

### Exercise #4

After each inhalation and exhalation, say to yourself, "I am relaxed." You may use any word or phrase that is meaningful to you. Repeat several times.