

## 4-7 Breathing Exercise

**This breathing exercise is very simple, takes almost no time, requires no equipment and can be done anywhere. It is perfect for calming you down.**

This exercise is a natural tranquiliser for the nervous system. Unlike sedative drugs, which may be effective when you first take them but lose their power over time, this exercise is subtle when you first try it and gains in power with repetition and practice. Do it at least twice a day. You cannot do it too frequently.

Once you develop this breathing technique, it will become a useful tool that you will always have with you.

- Use it whenever anything upsetting happens - before you react.
- Use it whenever you are aware of internal tension.
- Use it to help you fall asleep.

This exercise cannot be recommended highly enough. Everyone can benefit from it.

### Technique

Although you can do the exercise in any position, sit with your back straight while learning the exercise.

- Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge of tissue just behind your upper front teeth, and keep it there through the entire exercise. You will be exhaling through your mouth around your tongue; try pursing your lips slightly if this seems awkward.
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whooshing sound.
- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four.
- Pause.
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whooshing sound to a count of seven.
- This is one breath.
- Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

Note that you always inhale quietly through your nose and exhale audibly through your mouth.

The tip of your tongue stays in position the whole time.

Exhalation takes twice as long as inhalation.

The absolute time you spend on each phase is not important; the ratio of 4:7 is important.

With practice you can slow it all down and get used to inhaling and exhaling more and more deeply.

Do not do more than four breaths at one time for the first month of practice.

Later, if you wish, you can extend it to eight breaths. If you feel a little lightheaded when you first breathe this way, do not be concerned; it will pass.