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Stress Reductive Breathing Techniques

How controlled breathing can calm ones nerves, and lower stress levels

A method known as **Box Breathing** also called "square breathing" or Sama Vritti Pranayama, is a deep, deliberately slow and controlled breathing exercise that involves: Inhaling slowly, holding, exhaling slowly and holding the breath for an **equal count of usually 4 seconds** per action, and repeating the cycle for however many repetitions you wish, until you are suitably calmer, more focused and relaxed.

This, when explained as a pictographic creates a four-sided "box" shape, hence the name its given. It's a simple, yet effective method for reducing stress, improving mood, and helping one relax in times of extreme stress or pressure.

Inhale / Breathe inwards, slowly and deliberately for 4 seconds... Hold breath in, in a controlled manner for 4 seconds. Exhale / Breathe outwards, slowly and controlled for another for 4 seconds. Hold breath out, in a controlled manner for a further 4 seconds... ... and repeat as you wish.

Typically used in **Yoga** practices, it works by slowing down the heart rate / pulse, which can and often does become elevated in times of extreme stress to more manageable levels, which also helps lower a persons adrenaline within the body, and thus begins to "calm" one down. You could even close your eyes and do so whilst in total silence, or either by sitting, or standing, depending on what works for you...

<u>It doesn't always work for everyone or in every situation</u>, but it could do, so what harm is there in trying? **Stress is a silent killer after all**, with stress being very hard to notice internally until its often too late...

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