Using breathwork

What is breathwork?

Breathwork refers to the conscious control and manipulation of the breath to influence physical, mental, and emotional states.

Breathwork is rooted in ancient practices and supported by modern science. Breathwork offers a powerful, natural tool for managing stress, enhancing focus, and improving overall wellbeing.

It involves structured breathing techniques that activate the parasympathetic nervous system, helping the body to relax, reset, and recover. Whether we use this mindfulness technique daily or in moments of high stress, breathwork is accessible, easy to learn, and effective.

everymind
at work

Why is breathwork beneficial?

Reduces stress and anxiety

Slowing the breath calms the nervous system, lowering cortisol (stress hormone) levels.

Improves focus and clarity

Oxygenating the brain through deep breathing enhances concentration.

Boosts emotional regulation

Helps shift out of reactive states into grounded, intentional responses.

Supports better sleep

Gentle breathing techniques activate the body's relaxation response.

Enhances physical health

Improves oxygen efficiency and supports heart rate variability.

everymind
at work

Breathwork techniques

4–6–8 technique

This is a simple yet powerful technique to induce calm and release tension.

How to do it:

1 Sit or lie down comfortably.

2 Inhale gently through your nose for 4 seconds.

3 Hold your breath for 6 seconds.

4 Exhale slowly through your mouth for 8 seconds.

5 Repeat for 4–6 rounds, or until you feel more grounded.

TIPS

- Keep the exhale slow and controlled.

- Focus your attention on the sensation of the breath.

- It can be done anywhere - at your desk, on the train, or before bed.

Bow breathing

This technique is also known as diaphragmatic breathing or abdominal breathing. This is a more active technique often used to energise or clear the mind.

This technique focuses on its longer inhale (like pulling a bow back) and then a sharp exhale.

How to do it:

1 Stand or sit upright with your back straight.

2 Take a sharp, active inhale through the nose, expanding your belly.

3 Follow immediately with a sharp exhale through the nose, contracting the belly.

4 Continue with 10–15 quick breaths in and out through the nose (1 breath per second).

5 Pause. Breathe normally. Notice how you feel.

6 Repeat for 2–3 rounds, with a short rest between.

TIPS

- Keep the body still - movement should come only from the diaphragm.

- It's great as a morning energiser or a mid-afternoon mental reset.

- It's not recommended late at night due to its stimulating effect. This technique might cause dizziness.

everymind at work

Breathwork challenge

Breathwork is a skill; the more we do it, the easier and more beneficial it will become. Try incorporating one of these techniques into your daily routine:

Morning
Start with 1–2 rounds of Bow Breathing to energise.

Midday
Use either as a mindful break to reset during work.

Evening
Wind down with 4–6–8 breathing before sleep.