

# #TREbit *Just Breathe.*



- 4 Close your mouth and inhale through your nose for a count of four.
- 7 Hold your breath for a count of seven.
- 8 Exhale forcefully through the mouth, pursing the lips and making a "whoosh" sound, for a count of eight.



We often hear, "Just Breathe" or "Take a breath" when we are anxious or upset.

Why does breathing help us to calm down?

Our bodies have an automatic nervous system that controls automatic functions, like our heartbeat, blood pressure and digestion. The automatic system has two parts, the sympathetic nervous system and parasympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system helps the body to respond to danger and stress (fight or flight), while the parasympathetic nervous system controls your body's capacity to relax and rest. When one system is activated, it suppresses the other.

Deep breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system, not only engaging your body in relaxation, but simultaneously suppressing stress.

Deep breathing is a mixture of components that have a calming effect:

1. Slowing the breathing down – slow breathing signals the body to go into a restful state.
2. Focus on the breathing – directs the brain away from stress producing thoughts with intentional focus on the components of breathing, such as counting.
3. Exhaling triggers the parasympathetic nervous system, so long forceful exhales have the greatest benefit.

Some information in this #TREbit is taken from an article produced by the University of Washington Medical School. Follow this link to read the full article: <https://rightasrain.uwmedicine.org/mind/stress/why-deep-breathing-makes-you-feel-so-chill>