



# Caring for Our Health Care Heroes

## De-Stress with Breath

Meditative / Relaxing

Reduces anxiety

Centering & grounding

Aids restful sleep

Instructions: There are various methods of breath-work, many of which stem from the yogic practice of pranayama. Use these techniques alone, or in combination with acupuncture, self massage, or yoga to enhance effects.

### DEEP ABDOMINAL BREATHING

**Breath Ratio 1:1**—The length of time inhaling (through nose) should roughly equal the exhale.

Step 1: Rest comfortably, seated or laying on the floor.

Step 2: Notice movement in your ribcage & belly, and any tension in your body as you begin.

Step 3: Focus your attention on the inhale. Feel the air move into your nose, through the nasal passages, into the back of your throat, and feel your lungs expand. You should feel your ribs widen and lift with each breath. Let the exhale happen naturally.

Step 4: With your next breaths, feel the air expand into the ribs, but inhale just a touch more and press the air into your abdomen. Exhale & feel your belly release.

Repeat this sequence for a few minutes when needed, or 10-20 minutes during meditation or before sleep.

*Use this technique for better sleep, anytime you need a break, and actively during stressful situations to switch your nervous system out of “fight or flight” mode.*

### VARIED DURATION BREATHING

**Breath Ratio 1:2:1**—Beginners should inhale (through the nose), pause for double the duration, and exhale (through the mouth) for the same amount of time spent inhaling. Each sequence of INHALE : PAUSE : EXHALE is one breath cycle.

Step 1: Rest comfortably, seated or laying on the floor. Take several normal breaths.

Step 2: Gently place the tip of your tongue against the soft tissue just behind your top front teeth. You will keep your tongue in this position for the entire duration of the technique.

Step 3: INHALE through the nose for 5 sec— PAUSE 10 sec— EXHALE 5 sec through your mouth keeping your tongue in place.

REPEAT: Do this breath cycle ONLY 3-5 times.

REST: Relax and breathe normally for several minutes. If you find yourself becoming lightheaded, reduce the number of cycles. Get up slowly.

*Use this technique for better sleep, after acupuncture, self massage or yoga to re-set your nervous system—this will encourage your body to maintain relief.*

*We hope these tools bring you relief & comfort.  
Thank you for all you do to care for our community!*