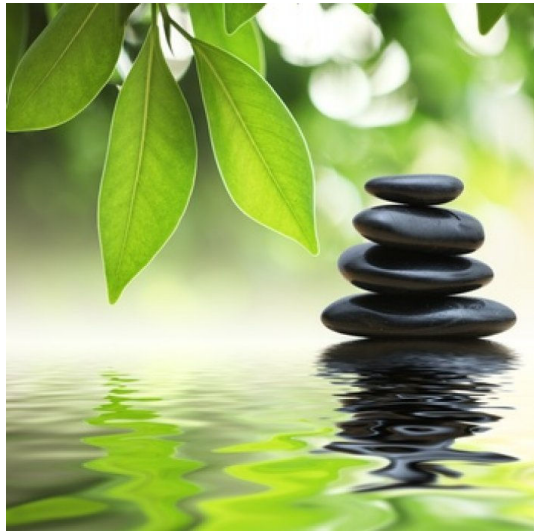# 4-7-8 Breathing

A relaxation technique

A guide for students, parents, and teachers

Junior / Intermediate

What is 4-7-8 breathing?

When you are **worried or stressed** about something, it affects how you breathe. You take **smaller breaths**, which means you get **less oxygen**.

4-7-8 breathing helps change that!

Taking deep breaths gets **more oxygen** into your body and helps **spread that oxygen all over your body**.

4-7-8 breathing also sends a message to your brain to **turn on the part of your nervous system that calms you down**.
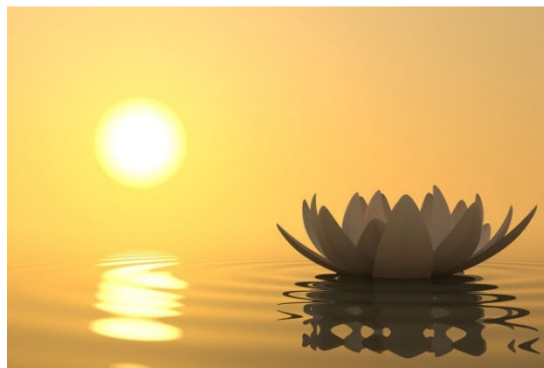
Who can do it?

Anyone!

- It's **easy**.
- It can be done **anywhere**.
- It's **fast**.
- It doesn't require any equipment.

When can I use it?

When something upsetting happens – before you react.
When you feel tense or worried.
When you can't fall asleep.
When you can't focus.

Even when you're feeling fine. It's good to practice 4-7-8 breathing every day!

How does it work?

To get ready…
Put the tip of your tongue against the top of your mouth, just behind your top front teeth.

Breathe out through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.

Now…

1. Close your mouth and breathe in quietly through your nose for a count of **four.**

2. Hold your breath for a count of **seven.**

3. Breathe out completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound, for a count of **eight.**
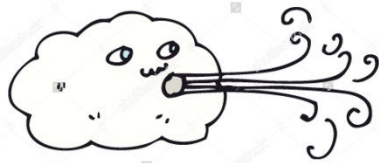
This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of **four breaths**.

THE TRICK IS TO KEEP BREATHING.

How often should I do it?

Do **at least two sets** of 4-7-8 breathing **every day**.

You can do as many sets as you want, but **do not do more than four breaths at one time** for the first month.

After a month of practice, you can work your way up to sets of **eight breaths**.

What are the benefits?

- Slows heart rate
- Lowers blood pressure
- Increases oxygen circulation
- Removes toxins from your system
- Clears your mind
- Helps manage stress

take a deep breath.
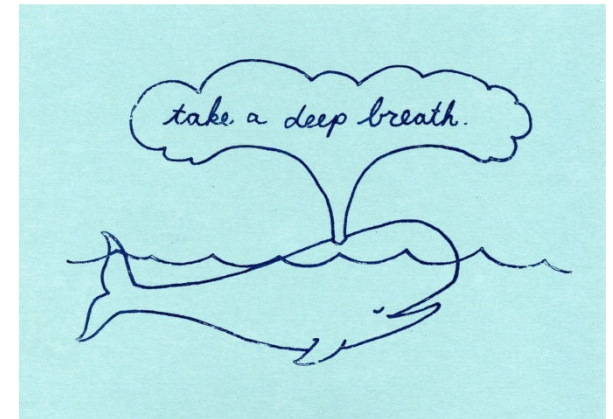
For more information, go to www.drweil.com.

Pamphlet prepared by:
Dr. Andrea Adams, Psychologist, TDSB
Ilana Lockwood, OISE/University of Toronto