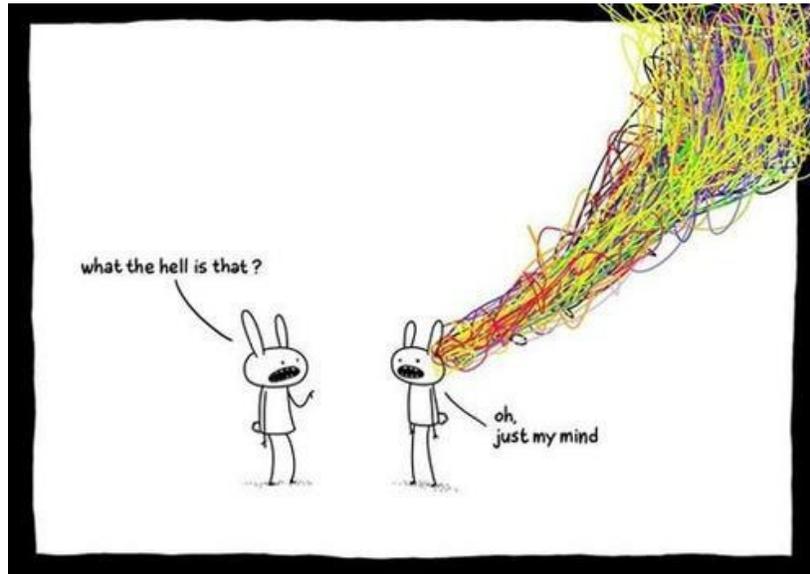




EBH CONSULTING LLC
Empowering Advancement Professionals

A few simple exercises can help you quiet the mind and reach a place of calm presence anytime, anywhere, invisibly. Pick one to practice three times a day. You don't have to be perfect—just be present.



A. Follow your own bloodstream

(Finding Your Way in a Wild New World, Martha Beck, Ph.D.)

1. Take a few full, deep breaths. Exhale completely; pause before inhaling.
2. In the space before you need to breathe again, **focus your attention on your heart** until you can feel it beating. This may take up to a minute.
3. Take another breath and exhale. Along with your heartbeat, **find the sensation of your pulse** moving through your hands, feet, scalp, entire body.
4. Stay focused on the feeling of your entire circulatory system as it channels your lifeblood to your head and extremities. See if you can feel it moving through your organs as well.
5. Perform some simple task--walking, washing the dishes, making your bed--while continuing to feel your heartbeat and overall pulse. It may feel strangely blissful.

B. Square Breathing

1. Inhale 2 3 4
2. Hold 2 3 4
3. Exhale 2 3 4
4. Hold 2 3 4
5. You can also extend each of the four segments for as long as you like.



C. Pull your senses into "Open Focus"

(The Open Focus Brain, Les Fehmi, Princeton researcher)

1. Sit, stand, or lie still. Focus your eyes sharply on an object in front of you.
2. *Without moving your eyes*, broaden your attention until it registers everything in your vision field, including the original object of focus.
3. Now, still without moving your eyes at all, make the object the foreground of your attention, and everything else the background.
4. Next, make the object the background, everything else the foreground.
5. Focus on everything in your visual field at once while repeating this yoga slogan: "Floor to ceiling, wall to wall, all things equal." This will help you reach a relaxed, wordless state.

D. A Simple Breathing Exercise to Calm Your Mind & Body (Robin Friedlander)

Not all breaths are created equal. Here's a simple, timed breathing exercise for calming both the nervous system and the overworked mind. **When you exhale even a few counts longer than your inhale**, the vagus nerve, running from the neck down through the diaphragm) sends a signal to your brain to turn up your parasympathetic nervous system and turn down your sympathetic nervous system.

The sympathetics command your fight or flight response. When they fire, your heart rate and your breathing speed up, and stress hormones like Cortisol start pumping through your bloodstream, preparing your body to face a threat. If the threat is, "A lion is chasing me and I need to run away," this is helpful. If the threat is, "I am late to work" or, "I'm upset with my mom," this is not particularly helpful and can be damaging. Frequent or lasting elevation of Cortisol disturbs all the hormonal systems of the body and weakens the immune system.

The parasympathetics, on the other hand, control your rest, digest, and relax response. When the parasympathetic system is dominant, your breathing slows, your heart rate drops, your blood pressure lowers as the blood vessels relax, and your body is put into a state of calm and healing *that is irresistible to all living beings. (italic phrase added by EBH.)*

E. And, a nice quick one (Abigail Steadley, master Mind/Body Coach)

Sit squarely. Notice your feet; feel them touching the floor.

1. Rest your hands on your knees, palms up and open
2. Take three big belly breaths, in through your nose, out through your mouth
3. While breathing deeply but normally, notice the insides of your hands.
4. Rest that way a moment.
Boom! Done.