

Transcript: Square Breathing – Video 1 – Module 2 – Present Moment Now

Transcript: Square Breathing, also known as box breathing, is a simple and effective breathing technique used to reduce stress, enhance concentration and promote relaxation. It has roots in the ancient controlled breathing techniques of Pranayama Yoga. Square breathing is utilised in various contexts and by people from diverse backgrounds. Square Breathing is used by military personnel, including special forces, to maintain calm and focus during high-stress situations. Athletes use square breathing to improve concentration, manage performance anxiety, and maintain composure under pressure. Teachers and school counsellors use it to help students manage test anxiety and improve focus and attention. Square Breathing is practised in therapeutic settings to help individuals cope with anxiety, panic attacks and PTSD. It is integrated into cognitive behavioural therapy and other counselling methods. Companies incorporate Square Breathing into wellness programmes to help employees manage stress and enhance productivity. Square Breathing is part of Zen meditation practices and martial arts training to help maintain calmness and focus. Square Breathing is widely used in various forms of meditation and mindfulness practices across different cultures and religions, including Buddhism and Hinduism. The technique involves four steps, each of equal duration, which can be visualised as forming the four sides of a square or box. Here is a detailed guide to practising Square Breathing. Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose for a count of four. Focus on filling your lungs completely, allowing your abdomen to rise. Hold your breath for a count of four. Try to keep your body relaxed and avoid tensing up. Breathe out slowly and completely through your mouth for a count of four. Focus on emptying your lungs and allowing your abdomen to fall. Hold your breath again for a count of four before beginning the next inhale. To summarise, the process can be described as: Inhale for four counts. Hold for four counts. Exhale for four counts. Hold for four counts. This cycle can be repeated for several minutes until a state of calm and focus is achieved. Square Breathing has several scientifically supported benefits related to its impact on the body's physiological and psychological processes. Deep breathing, specifically diaphragmatic breathing, activates the diaphragm, a muscle that helps fill the lungs more completely. This promotes efficient oxygen exchange. Deep inhalation increases the amount of oxygen entering the bloodstream, which is essential for cellular function and energy production. Holding the breath for a few seconds allows for more time for oxygen to be absorbed into the bloodstream and for carbon dioxide to be expelled from the bloodstream into the lungs. This pause can also help improve focus and mindfulness, as it requires conscious control and awareness of the breath. Slow, controlled exhalation stimulates the vagus nerve, which activates the parasympathetic nervous system, or PNS. The PNS is responsible for the body's rest and digest response, counteracting the fight or flight response of the sympathetic nervous system. Square Breathing helps reduce the levels of stress hormones in the body, promoting relaxation and a sense of calm. The deliberate, rhythmic nature of Square Breathing enhances mindfulness and concentration, making it easier to focus on the present moment and the tasks at hand. Regular practice of Square Breathing can improve emotional regulation by reducing anxiety and promoting a sense of stability and calm. Now let's get ready for the practice. Please find a comfortable place, relax your body and enjoy. You can do it at your own pace or follow our Square Breathing Practice video.