



## The People's Health Alliance

for The People, by The People

### Box Breathing Technique

With today's environment, many people carry internal stresses that they may not even be aware of, these can manifest as brain fog (difficulty to think), tiredness, stomach feeling like it's tied in knots, overall fatigue, headaches, low moods and even not breathing correctly.

Stress also burns out the synapses within our brains and inhibits neurogenesis. What this means is that stress can stop the brain generating functional neurons (not a good thing)

Many people also seem to be carrying post viral fatigue which can also manifest itself as brain fog, shortness of breath from just taking a few steps etc, and this can aid towards improvement from these symptoms.

#### **What is the "Box Breathing Technique" and why should I do this?**

Box Breathing, also known as "Square Breathing" is one of the simplest exercises for a person to do.

It will help you to slow down your breathing as you breath in a more calm and relaxed manner, it distracts your mind, it will decrease stress stored within the body, and it calms the nervous system.

This is all about bringing inner calm to your system, clearing the mind and bringing inner focus.

#### **If it is so simple, does it actually work or is it just another one of those "FAD" exercises people do?**

*The beauty of this exercise is its simplicity, even to the point of its name, Box Breathing 😊*

**It definitely is not "one of those FAD" breathing exercises** and the results are so successful, it is actually used by the Navy SEALs and many others so as to help them quickly bring their levels down and achieve inner calmness.

#### **Note:**

We are not Navy SEALs and (hopefully), not in the sort of high stress environment that they would be in. With this in mind, it is a good idea **to make yourself comfortable**, sitting on a chair or lying down, and **close your eyes whilst doing this**.

To stay focused and calm, SEALs practice these two simple controlled breathing techniques that help them de-stress in a jiffy:

## #1 Box Breathing

"Box breathing is a technique that helps you take control of your automatic breathing patterns to train your breath for optimal health and performance," says Mark Divine, former US Navy SEALs Commander, NYT bestselling author of *The Way of the SEAL* and founder of SEALFIT. "It combines the practice of optimal breathing with parasympathetic activation, concentration and mindfulness training," he adds.

Link to the above FORBES article, <<[here](#)>>

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

Before you begin with the Box Breathing (or Square Breathing), method, it is a good idea to first understand the type of breaths you will be taking... (explained below)

You will be doing something called "*Diaphragmatic Breathing*". What this means is that as you breath in, you gently push your stomach out. Try this for a few times now.

Now, as you are breathing in and pushing your stomach out, you also allow your chest to expand, so that you can take in more air. Then gently breath out again.

This is the breathing you will be doing as you carry out the **Box Breathing** exercise 😊

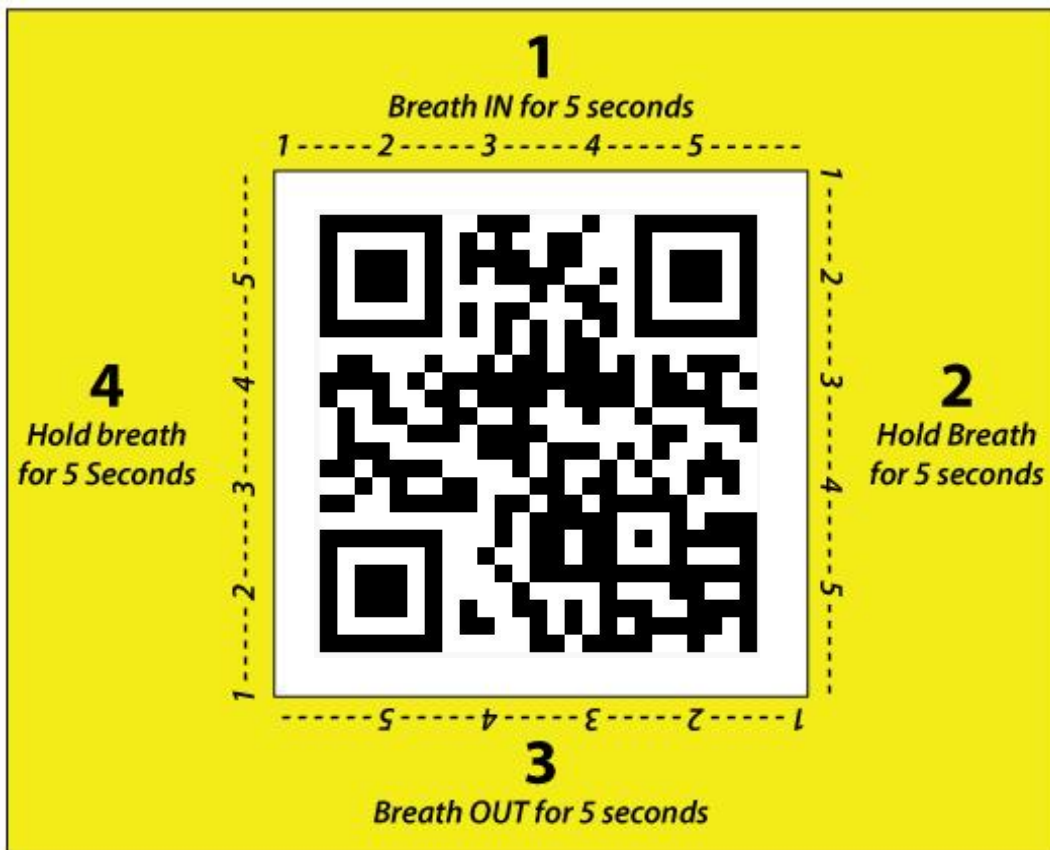
- 1, Inhale through the nose for 5 seconds.
- 2, Hold for 5 seconds.
- 3, Exhale for 5 seconds.
- 4, Hold for 5 seconds.

### Some Quick Tips:

Breathing out and holding it for 5 seconds may not be comfortable for everyone, so if you hold it for 4 or 3 seconds, that is totally fine. Do whatever feels the most comfortable for you. Also, if breathing in takes longer than 5 seconds, that is fine, as long as you expand your chest and have taken a big breath in.

Some people not only imagine the square whilst doing this, but also use their hand (or their index finger) to slowly and gently trace around the edges of the square as this helps re-enforce what they are doing.

## The Box Breathing Technique explained via diagram (below)



Repeat the above...

Remember, **15 times = 5 minutes**, or if you don't have a lot of time and want to do this quickly, then **6 times = 2 minutes**.

This is one of the fastest ways to not only achieve an inner calmness, but also to gently and safely work your lungs.

**Note:** - Sometimes, a person may carry a lot of built-up stress or anxiety and they find it hard for the mind to be in complete quietness whilst Box Breathing. If this is the case and you are able to, then putting this on ([Stress and Anxiety Relief](#)) in the background, quietly can also be a great help.

**Practice the Box Breathing Technique** as many times as you wish and **enjoy the amazing benefits it brings to the body and mind** 😊

This article has been written by Gio from the PHA Health Optimisation Team. For more information on the **PHA Health Optimisation Programme**, please visit [www.The-PHA.org](http://www.The-PHA.org) and click on the "Health Optimisation Programme" tab along the top bar.

\* - There is a **QR Code** in the centre of the Box Breathing picture that will take you straight to the PHA website 😊