



Breathing techniques



White Tea: Serenity breath

Think of it like the 4 sides of a box. You will begin counting your inhale, allowing it to travel deep into your belly for a count of five beats. At the end of the inhale, when your lungs are at their fullest, hold the breath in for a count of five beats. Then exhale all your breath out so your lungs are completely emptied to a count of five beats. Then hold the breath out for a count of five beats. So breathe in for a count of 5, hold at the top of the breath for 5, breathe out for a count of 5 and then hold at the bottom of the breath for 5. Do 4 rounds of this and then breathe normally with a calmer deeper breath.

Oolong Tea: Ocean breath

Hold your arms in front of you as through you are hugging a beachball. As you breathe in for a slow count of 5, bring both hands towards the heart. Pause and as you breathe out, push both hands away in front of you and breathe out for a count of 5.

Start to imagine you are doing this motion submerged in the ocean and you are pulling the water towards you and pushing it away in a rhythmic flowing movement. Feel the friction of the water in your hands. Feel your breath as a wave coming in and out with the movement of your hands. Feel the breath get deeper. Once you have done 5 rounds breathe normally but with a deeper breath.

Green Tea: Green breath

Every second of every day, we are 'in relationship' with the Earth through our breath. Think of your favourite plant or tree -it might be a tree in your garden or a type of flowering shrub you are drawn to. See its roots anchoring it deep into the ground- stable, grounded. Imagine the plant breathing out oxygen and breathing in CO₂ and then concentrate on your own breath, breathing in oxygen and breathing out CO₂. Then start to imagine your out breath becomes the plant's in breath and their out breath becomes your in breath and you create a cycle of breath. You are breathing in a green breath and the plant is breathing in a human breath. As you do this, consciously deepen each breath by extending the out-breath slightly each time. Once you feel calmer and more settled, breathe normally but with this deeper breath.

Black Tea: Heart-focused breath

So put your left hand over your heart and gently lay your right hand over the left. Shift your attention to the area of your heart. Imagine your breath passing in and out through your heart area or the centre of your chest as you slowly inhale and exhale. Breathe in for a count of 5 and out for a count of 5, slightly slowing the count each time until your breathing becomes deeper, unforced and comfortable. Breathe in a feeling of calm and balance, and breathe out any feelings of tension. Really notice the sense of comfort envelop you as you inhale soothing breaths and feel any anxiety and tension release. Keep going until you begin to feel your mind and body relax.

Pu'erh Tea: Grounding breath

Notice your inhales and your exhales. As we slowly breathe in notice any tension that might be hindering the in breath and try to release it as you slowly breathe out. Take several breaths, releasing any labouring in the breath until it feels like a deeper, smoother breath. Now take your awareness to your feet, make sure they are flat against the ground. Imagine the soles of your feet really connecting to the earth and putting down roots. Gently bring your awareness to the top of your head. Picture a warm, loving golden light washing slowly through you from the top of your head down towards your feet taking with it any tension, negative thoughts and anything that is no longer serving you with it, passing out through your feet into the earth below you and then breathe in mother earth's pure, nurturing and life-affirming energy back up into your body. Repeat this process once more.