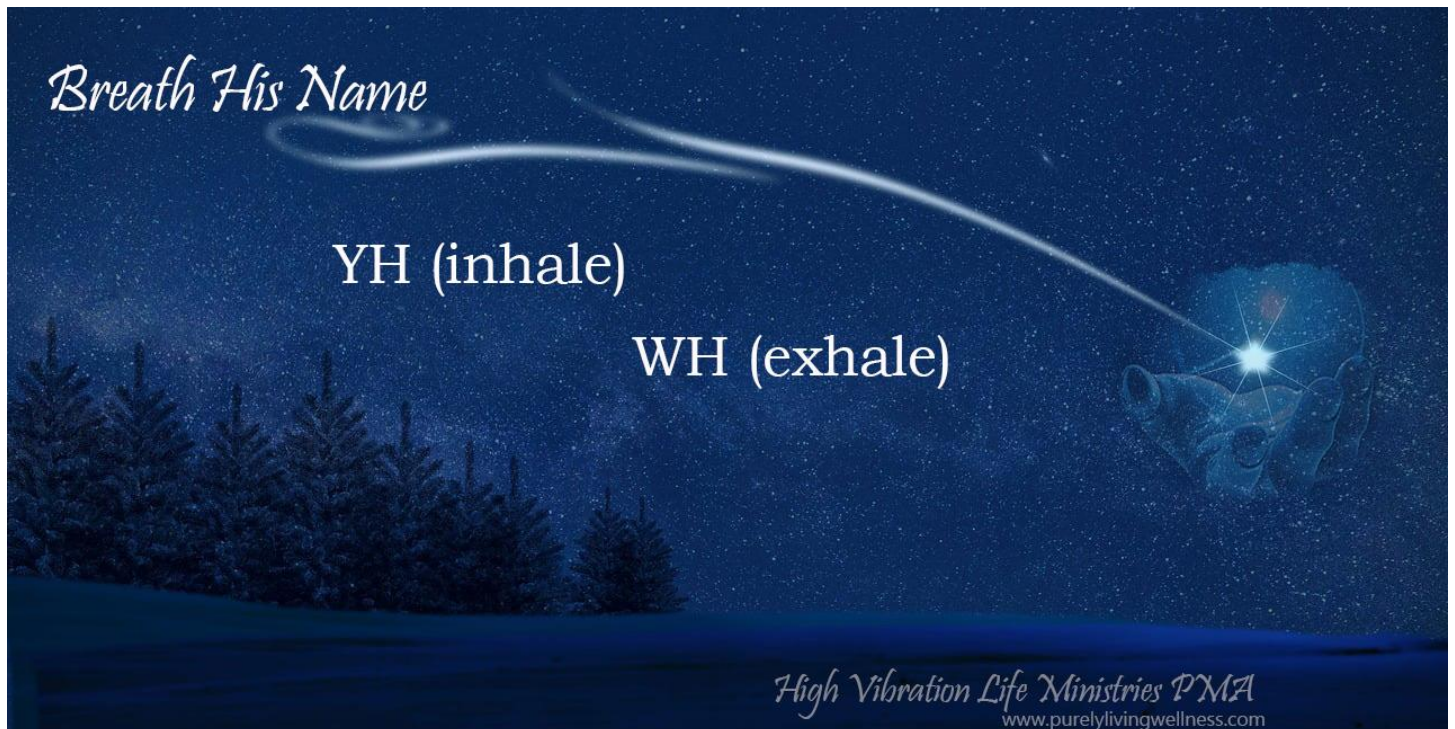




## Mindful Breathing Techniques

Mindful breathing is very important for self-care as it fuels our cells with oxygen. There are a variety of techniques and every person is going to find their own comfort zone. Please review the techniques offered below and put into practice the options that work best for you. If you have an existing lung condition, talk with your doctor prior to the practice of mindful breathwork.

Personally, I feel a great sense of peace wash over me when I mindfully focus on the sounds my breath makes when I inhale. The YH sound upon inhaling is not as pronounced as the WH sound with an exhale, but when I tune into my breath – it IS present. HE is present. It gives me a vision of my Creator filling my lungs with His breath. I would categorize this as focused breathing, but if you choose – you can incorporate these two sounds in to all techniques described in this breath work guide.



This guide is a compilation of different techniques that Rita Shimniok has gathered, or techniques that she has used personally through various wellness experiences and trainings. May you find your own breath!

## 1. Lengthen your exhale

Inhaling deeply may not always calm you down. Taking a deep breath in is actually linked to the sympathetic nervous system, which controls the fight-or-flight response. *But exhaling is linked to the parasympathetic nervous system*, which influences our body's ability to relax and calm down.

Contrary to what we may believe, taking too many deep breaths too quickly can actually cause you to [hyperventilate](#). Hyperventilation decreases the amount of oxygen-rich blood that flows to your brain.

When we feel anxious or under stress, it's easier to breathe too much and end up hyperventilating — even if we're trying to do the opposite.

1. Before you take a big, deep breath, try a thorough exhale instead. Push all the air out of your lungs, then simply let your lungs do their work inhaling air.
2. Next, try spending a little bit longer exhaling than you do inhaling. For example, try inhaling for four seconds, then exhale for six.
3. Try doing this for two to five minutes.

This technique can be done in any position that's comfortable for you, including standing, sitting, or lying down.

## 2. Abdomen Breathing

[Breathing from your diaphragm](#) (the muscle that sits just beneath your lungs) can help reduce the amount of work your body needs to do in order to breathe.

To learn how to breathe from your diaphragm:

### Check-in

1. For comfort, lie down on the floor or bed with pillows beneath your head and knees. Or sit in a comfortable chair with your head, neck, and shoulders relaxed, and your knees bent.
2. Then, put one hand under your rib cage and one hand over your heart.
3. Inhale and exhale through your nose, noticing how or if your stomach and chest move as you breathe.
4. Can you isolate your breathing so you bring air deeper into your lungs? What about the reverse? Can you breathe so your chest moves more than your stomach?

Eventually, you want your stomach to move as you breathe, instead of your chest.

### Practice belly breathing

1. Sit or lie down as described above.
2. Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach somewhere above your belly button.
3. Breathe in through your nose, noticing your stomach rise. Your chest should remain relatively still.
4. Purse your lips and exhale through your mouth. Try engaging your stomach muscles to push air out at the end of the breath.

For this type of breathing to become automatic, you'll need to practice it daily. Try doing the exercise three or four times a day for up to 10 minutes.

If you haven't been using your diaphragm to breathe, you may feel tired at first. It'll get easier with practice though.

### **3. Breath Focus - this one helps with symptoms of anxiety.**

When deep breathing is focused and slow, it can help reduce anxiety. You can do this technique by sitting or lying down in a quiet, comfortable location. Then..:

1. Notice how it feels when you inhale and exhale normally. Mentally scan your body. You might feel tension in your body that you never noticed.
2. Take a slow, deep breath through your nose.
3. Notice your belly and upper body expanding.
4. Exhale in whatever way is most comfortable for you, sighing if you wish.
5. Do this for several minutes, paying attention to the rise and fall of your belly.
6. Choose a word to focus on and vocalize during your exhale. Words like "safe" and "calm" can be effective.
7. Imagine your inhale washing over you like a gentle wave.
8. Imagine your exhale carrying negative and upsetting thoughts and energy away from you.
9. When you get distracted, gently bring your attention back to your breath and your words.

Practice this technique for up to 20 minutes daily when you can.

### **4. Resonant Breathing**

Resonant breathing, also called coherent breathing, can help you calm anxiety and get into a relaxed state. To try it yourself:

1. Lie down and close your eyes.
2. Gently breathe in through your nose, mouth closed, for a count of six seconds.
3. Don't fill your lungs too full of air.
4. Exhale for six seconds, allowing your breath to leave your body slowly and gently. Don't force it.
5. Continue for up to 10 minutes.
6. Take a few additional minutes to be still and focus on how your body feels.

### **5. Lion's Breath**

Lion's breath involves exhaling forcefully. To try lion's breath:

1. Get into a kneeling position, crossing your ankles and resting your bottom on your feet. If this position isn't comfortable, sit cross-legged.
2. Bring your hands to your knees, stretching out your arms and your fingers.

3. Take a breath in through your nose.
4. Breathe out through your mouth, allowing yourself to vocalize “ha.”
5. During exhale, open your mouth as wide as you can and stick your tongue out, stretching it down toward your chin as far as it will go.
6. Focus on the middle of your forehead (third eye) or the end of your nose while exhaling.
7. Relax your face as you inhale again.
8. Repeat the practice up to six times, changing the cross of your ankles when you reach the halfway point.

## 6. Alternate Nostril Breathing

To try [alternate nostril breathing](#), sit down in a comfortable place, lengthening your spine and opening your chest. Rest your left hand in your lap and raise your right hand. Then, rest the pointer and middle fingers of your right hand on your forehead, in between the eyebrows. Close your eyes, inhaling and exhaling through your nose.

1. Use your right thumb to close the right-hand nostril and inhale slowly through the left.
2. Pinch your nose closed between your right thumb and ring finger, holding the breath in for a moment.
3. Use your right ring finger to close your left nostril and exhale through the right, waiting for a moment before you inhale again.
4. Inhale slowly through the right nostril.
5. Pinch your nose closed again, pausing for a moment.
6. Now, open the left side and exhale, waiting a moment before you inhale again.
7. Repeat this cycle of inhaling and exhaling through either nostril up to 10 times. Each cycle should take up to 40 seconds.

## 7. Guided Meditation

Some people use [guided meditation](#) to alleviate anxiety by interrupting patterns of thinking that perpetuate stress. You can practice guided meditation by sitting or lying in a cool, dark, comfortable place and relaxing. Then, listen to calming recordings while relaxing your body and steadying your breathing.

Guided meditation recordings help take you through the steps of visualizing a calmer, less stressed reality. It can also help you gain control over intrusive thoughts that trigger anxiety.

This [link is a meditation](#) to guide one through anxiety. The sound of the voice of the person leading one through a meditation does matter. There are a number of meditations offered on YouTube to explore. The link I provided is led by a person whose voice in itself is quite calming, and as well, the frequency of the background music soothes the soul.

## In Summary

Mindful breath work can be especially helpful for those who are experiencing an anxiety or panic attack. Technique #3, Breath Focus, has been noted to reduce anxiety. If you are prone to anxiety, for the purpose of being mindful, perhaps repeating the thought, *"I am shutting off my amygdala"*.

It is my belief that thoughts and words can manifest into reality with the added power of the name of Jesus, as He claims authority over the entities that create anxiousness, and has authority to heal your body. In my own practice of mindfulness, I wholeheartedly embrace the power of the spoken out loud word. When I am dowsing in the Spirit, I visually see my cross pendulum generate greater speed as I go from thought in mind, to whisper, to speaking a phrase in a normal voice, to speaking the same phrase in a commanding voice. The motion of the pendulum almost becomes parallel to the ground as it swings back and forth! It always amazes me to see the energy, and especially the energy in the power of Jesus name spoken out loud!

Breath work may often be combined with additional modes of relaxing the body – such as tapping or applying light pressure to touch points. Please peruse **Member Resources** on the [purelylivingwellness.com](http://purelylivingwellness.com) website for additional self-treatment applications. Be sure to set up your own membership password so that you can access the private membership areas of the website.

*In closing, a call to action...read the following instructions and then take a few moments...*

Please close your eyes. Inhale with lips slightly parted – for a count of seven. Listen to the sound upon intake of air. Hold for seven seconds, and then slowly exhale with lips parted – again listening to the sound of your breath. Repeat for a total of three times. I like to place my right hand over my abdomen and my left hand over my heart and feel the breath inside me.

It is said that God created us to speak His name upon every breath that we take, thereby praising and worshiping Him with each breath. Below - three scriptures - His Word for thought...

1. For the Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. – Job 33:4
2. God, the LORD, created the heavens and stretched them out. He created the earth and everything in it. He gives breath to everyone, life to everyone who walks the earth. – Isaiah 42:5
3. But there is a spirit within people, the breath of the Almighty within them, that makes them intelligent. – Job 32:8