

breathing exercises to help you quit

Do you reach for a cigarette in times of stress or anger? You think it calms you down and relaxes you, right? Well, listen to this...

When you feel anxious, upset, or angry, you have a cigarette and feel better; it is because the cigarette has resolved the nicotine craving that you were also feeling. The anxiety/upset/anger hasn't changed, you feel better because you are no longer craving nicotine, which you wouldn't be craving if you didn't smoke.

In other words, the cigarette has solved a problem it, alone caused.

The next time you feel anxious, upset, or angry, remove yourself from the situation (like you would if you were going outside for a smoke) and practice breathing. I know you breathe every minute of every day otherwise, you wouldn't be here, but when was the last time you even noticed your breath?

Deep breathing can help you to move into a more positive state of mind and can help you to manage nicotine cravings. Getting fresh oxygen into your lungs, especially whilst they are recovering from smoking really helps to improve your physical and mental health. Deep breathing is also a good way to realise there are other ways to relax and calm yourself after you quit smoking.

deep breathing exercise

The first time you try this, either sit or lie down, once you have the hang of it you can do it standing or when you are getting on with your day.

Put your hands on your belly (to keep you focused and so you can feel what is happening), breathe in through your nose and feel your belly expand, filling with air, like a balloon.





Breathe out through pursed lips; this will help to slow your breath down and feel your belly deflate.

If you can, keep breathing like this for 5 minutes. Once your breath has slowed down, you can breathe out of your nose if you prefer.

Keep your breath slow and steady, and put your hands on your belly to feel the movement. When you recognise when you are breathing from your belly, you can remove your hands and do this simple breathing practice anytime you feel a nicotine craving or are trying to calm down.

