

## Mini Relaxation Exercises

Mini relaxation exercises are focused breathing techniques that help reduce anxiety and tension immediately. You can do them with your eyes open or closed. You can do them any place, at any time; no one will know that you are doing them.

### Good Times to Do a “Mini”

- Before taking an exam
- While at the computer lab waiting for your document to print
- While waiting in line
- When someone says something that bothers you
- While waiting for the announcement of a grade
- While waiting for a phone call
- In the dentist’s chair
- When you feel overwhelmed by what you need to accomplish in the near future
- When in pain
- When you

### Mini Version 1- Breath Focused

- a. Count very slowly to yourself from ten down to zero, one number for each breath. Thus, with the first diaphragmatic breath, you say ‘ten’ to yourself, with the next breath, you say ‘nine’, etc. If you start feeling light-headed or dizzy, slow down the counting. When you get to ‘zero’, see how you are feeling. If you are feeling better, great! If not, try to do it again.
- b. As you inhale, count very slowly up to four; as you exhale, count slowly back down to one. Thus, as you inhale, you say to yourself ‘one, two, three, four’, as you exhale, you say to yourself ‘four, three, two, one”. Do this several times.
- c. After each inhalation, pause for a few seconds; after you exhale, pause again for a few seconds. Do this for several breaths.

### Mini Version 2- Physical Focused

- a. Massage your forehead, jaw, back of neck, and shoulders
- b. Stretch and yawn
- c. Walk counting four paces as you breathe in and four paces as you breathe out

- d. Coordinate your breath with any activity, for example, writing, jogging, drawing, lifting weights, walking, etc.

#### Mini Version 3- Imagery Focused

- a. Briefly picture yourself in a place you find relaxing
- b. Contemplate a picture of a nature scene
- c. Imagine the characteristics of one of the following or any other object which portrays characteristics you find calming or supportive in the moment:
  - Tree (strong, rooted, expansive)
  - Mountain (timeless, strong, stable)
  - Waves (fluid, limitless)
  - Sun (radiant, warm)
  - Wind (free)

#### Mini Version 4- Mindfulness Focused

- a. Look out the window for a few moments
- b. Notice something new
- c. Listen. What is the most distant sound you hear? The next distant?
- d. Appreciate the sensation of being in the situation, the feel, smell, sight of certain objects
- e. Focus on being exactly where you are, keeping your thoughts from flowing into the future or past