

MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT

#BREATHE

Have you ever worried about a test, presentation, or assignment? Worry or anxiety can be a helpful emotion that motivates you to prepare. But what if the anxiety overwhelms you? Here are some tips to use breathing to help calm your nerves and increase focus!

4-7-8 Technique

Try this one! Breathe in through your **nose** for **4 seconds**. Now, **hold** your breath for **7 seconds**. Slowly exhale through your **mouth** for **8 seconds**. Take a moment and notice how you feel. Next time you are feeling anxious try to remember: **4-7-8**. The key is to practice this before the next big event!



Belly Breathe

Place one hand on your belly. Place one hand on your chest. Now breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. Feel the belly move & the chest remain still.

Equal Time

The key here is counting. Count your breaths and inhale and exhale for **equal seconds**. Try using 5 seconds. Inhale for **5 seconds**. Exhale for **5 seconds**. When we get anxious breathing can become rapid and irregular. This tip helps us to practice bringing our breathing back into rhythm. Try a few rounds then notice how you are feeling. You are likely to still feel anxiety. That's OK. These tips are about helping make anxiety **tolerable**. Not invisible.

Lion's Roar

For when you are overwhelmed and alone try using the Lion's Roar. Breathe deeply through your nose and then with a wide-open mouth exhale with a "Ha" or a "roar" sound. This is best used when you have a private space away from other students. Many athletes will use this technique to relieve the anxiety of a big game or moment. Most athletes have breathing routines for moments such as shooting free-throws, penalty kicks, gymnastic routines, etc. What works for athletics also works for academics and life. Try it!

Struggling to find something that works for you? Consider the prepaid counseling provided by your school!

