

Day 1: Whatever you do, keep on breathing

Hi,

Welcome to day 1 for our first tip: 'Whatever you do, keep on breathing'

Why?

1. Because it works.
2. It only takes a minute.
3. You can do it everywhere even in a room full of people and they won't even notice and
4. You don't need any additional tools

Now why is breathing so important?

You might know that when you are stressed, your body has a specific reaction. You go into the 'hee'¹ (;-D) mode. It has also a scientific name but... let's call it the 'hee' mode. Now, when you go into that 'hee' mode, you might have noticed that you are not always your most efficient self, you could make the wrong decisions, you don't always behave calmly, reasonably...

So it is important to be able to go back to the 'ffff'² mode, because then, you are at your best. This 'ffff' mode can be provoked artificially.

How? With this type of breathing I am going to show you.

Actually it is called abdominal breathing.

And what is abdominal breathing?

When you breathe in, you are not going to go like this and expand your chest. No. You are going to fill you lungs (without expanding your chest). You can't really go to the back because there is your spine. So basically, your lungs are going to need some space, they are going to push the diaphragm (which is the muscle between the lungs and the intestines and actually, your belly is going to go 'out' a bit.

So when you breathe in, the belly goes out.

When you breathe out, the belly goes in again.

Can you do this?

Actually, this is how you breathe when you are totally calm.

Let's make it a bit more complicated, sophisticated. Let's add 4-4-4-4.

What does that mean? It means the following:

When breathing in, you count to 4.

Then you hold your breath, counting to 4

You breathe out, counting to 4

And you do nothing, counting to 4.

¹ For this you will have to watch the video first... It was hard to 'transcribe' the sound...

² Idem... ;-D

(Then we try it together a couple of times. First I show it, then we try together and finally, the full set 3 times in a row)

- Should the timing not suit you, you can always do it a bit quicker or a bit slower, it's up to you but I will take 'my rhythm'.
- Try breathing in through your nose and breathing out through your mouth.

Some of you might actually feel the need to yawn now, you might start to yawn spontaneously. And this proves that it works. It means that your 'ffff' mode has been activated.

When can you use this?

- At a moment of acute stress to help you keep on thinking straight.
- You can use it a couple of times a day, just to take some pressure off.
- Or when you find yourself in front of a person who's aggressive or about to push your buttons, you can use it, not to get defensive or aggressive.

Good luck, make sure you try it out for tomorrow and if you like it, share it with a friend.

See you tomorrow for the next tip.

Bye!