



The Power of Breath

Neuroscience researches are showing that with our breath we can biologically regulate the body and the mind and calm the reactive core of the brain. Our breath has a dozen benefits for our health and overall good mental well-being. When we are upset our breathing changes as well. The good news is that with the regulation and rhythm of our breathing we can influence our too active and aroused sympathetic nervous system, as a result of trauma.

Module	Submodules	Group size	Duration
• Intervention	• Stress Management	• Individual • Small group • Large group	• 20 - 30 min

Keywords

relaxation, calmness, proper breathing, concentration, memory

Aims

Learn to breath properly to gain many health benefits. By proper breathing we are enhancing our memory, concentration, relaxation and oxygenating the mindful and thinking part of the brain.

Participants

The activity is suitable for both, individual and group work (Small group between 7-12 participants or larger group).

Description

Correct breathing technique and thereof associated oxygen supply are both important for the functioning of our cells, metabolism and blood stream, for constant care and massage of internal organs, our voice and mood and for our general well-being. Our breathing is in general a good indicator of our mood - we tend to breathe differently if we pay attention or if we are surprised, if we are afraid or in doubt.

The exercise Perfect Breath comprises three phases. In implementing the exercise, the trainer/teacher should follow the steps below:

Step 1: Breathe out slowly through your nose and without holding your breath start to breathe in slowly. While you are breathing in, widen your stomach and its walls, then your chest and at the very end slightly lift your collarbone.

Step 2: Once your lungs are full, start to breathe out slowly through your nose so that first you lower your collarbone, then contract your chest muscles and in the end breathe the air out of your stomach and contract abdomen muscles.

Step 3: Repeat the breath in/breathe out cycle (max. 6 consecutive cycles should be performed).

Step 4: End the entire cycle by breathing in and breathing out normally; through your nose of course.

Step 5: Relax and breathe normally.

If we are doing this exercise as a group activity then at the end we can encourage a group discussion of the impact of proper breathing on our well-being. We also give space for participants' feedback.

Material

No needed.

Method

self-awareness technique, experiential learning.

Advice for Facilitators

The trainer should provide proper ventilation if the activity is conducted in a room or he can decide to do the exercise outdoors. Make sure the participants wear comfortable clothes. Breathing exercises should be done at least an hour and a half after the last meal.

Source (APA)

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Handouts

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