

6. Slowing down breathing

In this exercise you will be consciously slowing down your breathing. This helps your body to feel less tense, your mind calms down and your thinking becomes clearer. Work out the pace and speed that works best for you.

Breathe in for the count of three.

Breathe out for the count of three.

Continue to do this and each time slow the count to three very slightly.

Don't force the slowing down process – just allow your counting to gently keep time with a minor slowing down or the breathing for each time you repeat the exercise.

When you have slowed your breathing down and notice that you have come to a pace that feels comfortable, then stay at that pace, continuing to count your breath in to the count of three and out to the count of three.

A variation to this exercise is instead of counting the breaths in and out you may wish to spell them in – you might wish to spell “c-a-l-m” or “r-e-l-a-x”.

When you breathe in, spell the letters – “c-a-l-m” or “r-e-l-a-x”.

When you breathe out, spell the letters – “c-a-l-m” or “r-e-l-a-x”.

Each time you repeat the exercise slow the spelling down a little.

When you get to a slower pace that feels comfortable then stay at that pace, continuing to spell your breath in and to spell your breath out.