

Nasal + LSD Breathing

A foundational breathing pattern that keeps you calm, steady, and focussed.

Light: quiet, gentle, nasal breathing

Slow: around six breaths per minute (no need to count just slow the pace)

Deep: into the abdomen and lower ribs, not the chest

Guide

- Place awareness on flow of breath through your nose
- Keep breathing smooth and comfortable
- Upright but not uptight
- Jaw soft, shoulders relaxed

Benefits

- Steadier focus
 - Lower baseline tension
 - More balanced energy through the day
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Physiological Sigh - the 20 second reset breath

A rapid, reliable way to shift out of fight-or-flight and clear mental scatter.

How to

- Inhale through the nose
- Take a second small “sip” inhale
- Long, slow exhale (twice as long as the inhale)
- Repeat 1-3 times.

Why it works

- Reopens lung air sacs that collapse during shallow breathing
- Activates dedicated ‘sigh switch’ in the brain

Benefits

- Quickly reduces tension and over-arousal
 - Clears head before next task
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Box Breathing - Calm, Steady Focus

A balanced breathing pattern used to stabilise attention and energy.

How to

- Inhale 4 seconds
- Hold 4 seconds
- Exhale 4 seconds
- Hold 4 seconds
- Repeat for 1-2 minutes.

(The count doesn't matter - the inhale, holds, and exhale should all match.)

Why it works

- Balances effect of inhalation and exhalation on autonomic nervous system

Benefits

- Regulates stress and steadies focus

Breath Holds - CO₂ Training for Clearer Thinking

A short pause after an exhale that gently increases CO₂ and boosts clarity.

How to

- Exhale through the nose
- Hold your breath at the end of the exhale
- Wait until you feel a gentle urge to breathe
- Take a slow nasal inhale to recover

Benefits

- Improves blood flow and oxygen delivery to the brain
- Sharper, clearer focus
- Lifts energy

Key points

- Keep it gentle, no strain
- Skip holds if pregnant, experiencing dizziness, or have cardiovascular or neurological conditions

Yoga Nidra / NSDR - Access Deep Rest Without Sleeping

A body-scan practice that brings you into a deep rest state

How to

- Lie down or sit comfortably
- Slowly move your attention through the body
- Name or notice each body part as you go (hands, arms, face, chest, legs, feet)
- Follow a steady, unhurried pace for 5–10 minutes

Why it works

- Shifts the nervous system into a restorative state
- One brain-imaging study found Yoga Nidra / NSDR can increase dopamine release by around 65%

Benefits

- Deep relaxation
- Reliable reset after pressure or overwhelm
- Helpful during burnout recovery

If you found these tools helpful, you'll find more guides and practical insights on recovery, stress, burnout, breathing, focus, and performance at:

paulholmes.co/insights-articles/

If you have any questions or want guidance on using these tools, you're welcome to get in touch: paul@paulholmes.co

This handout is educational and not a medical treatment. If you have respiratory, cardiovascular, neurological, or mental health conditions, use these practices gently and stop if you feel unwell. Speak with your GP or healthcare professional if you have concerns about your health.

