

## Relaxation Response Dr Andrew Weil

Life is stressful and always has been.

Whatever objective stress you have to deal with, you can activate the so-called relaxation response. You can evoke the relaxation response in many ways: by working on your breathing, practicing yoga, taking biofeedback training, floating in water or stroking a cat or dog you love.

I have long promoted the benefits of working with the breath as the simplest most efficient way of taking advantage of the mind-body connection to affect both physical and mental health. Here is a simple relaxing breath technique you can try at home:

1. Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge behind and above your front teeth, and keep it there throughout the exercise.
2. Exhale completely through the mouth and make a **whoosh** sound.
3. Inhale deeply and quietly through your nose to the count of four (with your mouth closed).
4. Hold breath for a count of seven
5. Exhale audibly through your mouth to a count of eight.
6. Repeat steps 3, 4 and 5 for a total of four breaths.

Practice the exercise at least twice a day and whenever you feel stressed, anxious and or off center. After a month, if you are comfortable with it, increase to eight breaths each time.

It is the most cost-and-time efficient relaxation methods I have discovered, and I teach it to all my patients and to all health professionals I train

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