# Deep Breathing

Diaphragmatic breathing, or belly breathing, has been shown to have incredible mental and physical health benefits. It can help reduce stress and anxiety, decrease depression, increase problem-solving abilities, lower our blood pressure and heart rate, cope with symptoms of PTSD, and decrease cortisol, our stress hormone, just to name a few benefits.

#### STEP 5

## REPEAT FOUR TIMES

Do this exercise at least four times in a row.
Allow your body to relax.
Keep your mind busy with the counts so it doesn't wander back to your stressors. You'll have to practice regularly to get the full benefit.

#### STEP 4

#### BREATH OUT

Exhale your breathe through your mouth to the count of four. Count to yourself ... 1 ... 2 ... 3... 4 ... Imagine you are blowing out the candles on your birthday cake. Your hands will feel your "balloon" deflate



#### STEP 1

#### GET COMFORTABLE

Lay down or sit in a comfortable upright position that allows your core to take in a full breath to your belly. If you slouch, you will squish your diaphragm which reverts breathing to your chest, limits your breath and stress.

#### STEP 2

### TAKE A DEEP BREATH

Breathe in through your nose to the count of four. Count to yourself ... 1...2...3...4...
Breathe deeply as if you are blowing up a balloon in your stomach. Placing your hands on your stomach will allow you to feel your "balloon" to inflate.

#### **HOLD**

Pause and HOLD your breathe for a count of four.

Count to yourself ... 1 ... 2 ... 3 ... 4 ...

If you don't like the hold, that's ok. Just exhale.