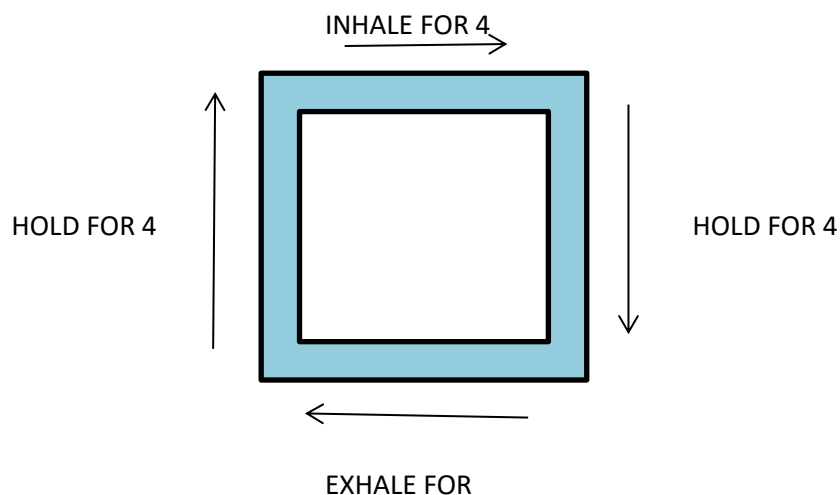


BOX/ DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

Breathing can be a mindful method for reducing stress. A technique called **diaphragmatic/box breathing** — deep, abdominal breathing paired with paced respiration — has been shown to ignite positive mental and physiological outcomes. A 2011 study found that just one day of breathing exercise relieved the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization induced by job burnout. Other psychological studies have shown it reduces anxiety, depression, and stress.

Before you get started, make sure that you're seated upright in a comfortable chair with your feet flat on the floor. Try to be in a stress-free, quiet environment where you can focus on your breathing. Close your eyes if you wish.

Keeping your hands relaxed in your lap with your palms facing up, focus on your posture. You should be sitting up straight. This will help you take deep breaths. "Box" breathing uses the count of 4 to guide your breathing.



Take a deep breath in through your nose for a count of 4. Imagine your belly is a balloon inflating as you inhale. Breathe deep into your lower lungs.

1. Hold your breath for a count of 4.
2. Exhale through your mouth for a count of 4. Your belly deflates, imagine your navel descending to touch your spine.
3. Hold for a count of 4. This completes 1 cycle.
4. Repeat a few cycles of this breathing pattern for 7-8 cycles to begin with.

You can gradually build the number of cycles up or reduce them as per your requirements.