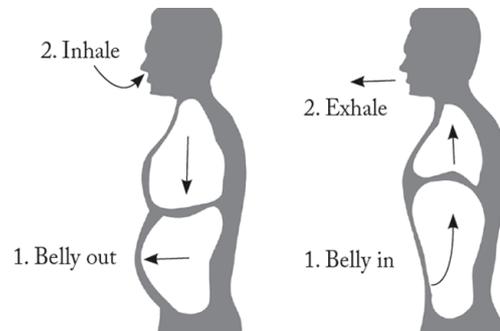


## Basic Breath Exercise

- Close your eyes and become aware of your breathing.
- Place your hands in front of your navel and feel your diaphragm move out as you inhale
- Relax your shoulders – they should remain soft and easy during this breathing exercise
- Inhale deeply through your nose for the count of 4
- Hold the breath for a count of 4
- Exhale the breath through your mouth like a long slow sigh until every last particle of used oxygen has been expelled from your lungs
- Now begin to establish a regular rhythm using either a count of 4-2-4-2 or 8-4-8-4. That is inhaling for a count of 4, holding that breath for a count of 2 before exhaling for a count of 4, then pausing for a count of 2 before taking the next breath.
- If you find counting too mechanical you can exchange it for a simple spoken phrase such as ‘peace or calm’.



## Alternate Nostril Breathing Exercise

Alternate nostril breathing is central to yogic meditation and is proven to be effective in dealing with stress. The techniques given here are adapted from classical yoga.

- Keep the two main fingers of your right hand closed extend your thumb and ring finger.
- Close the right nostril with your right thumb and inhale through the left nostril. Do this to the count of four seconds.
- Immediately close the left nostril with your right ring finger and now both nostrils are closed for the count of two.
- Remove your thumb from the right nostril, and exhale through this nostril. Do this to the count of four seconds. This completes a half round.
- Close your left nostril with your right ring finger and inhale through the right nostril to the count of four seconds.
- Immediately close the right nostril with your right thumb and now both nostrils are closed for the count of two
- Remove your ring finger from the left nostril and exhale through the right nostril to the count of four seconds. This completes one full round.