

 Goodfellow Gems are chosen by Goodfellow Director, Bruce Arroll to be either practice changing or thought provoking. You are being mailed these as you are a member of the Goodfellow learning community.

Two ways of breathing to improve mood/anxiety

Researchers from Stanford University reported how two types of breathing for 5 minutes per day were better for mood and anxiety than mindfulness meditation, where the breathing is just watched.^{1,2}

'Sighing', characterized by deep breaths (a large breath and an extra inhalation) followed by extended, relatively longer exhales, has been associated with psychological relief, shifts in autonomic states, and a resetting of respiratory rate.

'Box breathing' or 'tactical breathing', which military members have used for stress regulation and performance improvement, is inhaling for a count of 4, holding for a count of 4, exhaling for a count of 4 and holding again for a count of 4.³ The researchers asked participants to breathe in through their noses and out through their mouths.²

References:

1. [Melis Yilmaz Balban: Cyclic breathing and stress](#) RNZ (2023)
2. [Brief structured respiration practices enhance mood and reduce physiological arousal](#) Cell Rep Med. (2023)
3. [Box Breathing](#) Healthline

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