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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.¹²

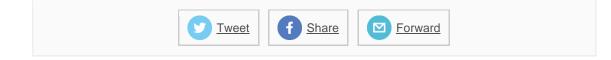
'Sighing', characterized by deep breaths (a large breath and an extra inhalation) followed by extended, relatively longer exhales, has been associated with psychological relief, shifts in autonomic states, and a resetting of respiratory rate.

'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. <u>Brief structured respiration practices enhance mood and reduce physiological</u> <u>arousal</u> Cell Rep Med. (2023)
- 3. Box Breathing Healthline

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Our mailing address is: Goodfellow Unit The University of Auckland | Grafton Campus 22-30 Park Ave, Grafton Auckland, Auck 1023 New Zealand