

# Detailed Buteyko Breathing Practice

## 1. Setting the Environment

- **Quiet Space:** Find a calm, distraction-free environment where you can focus.
  - **Posture:** Sit with your spine straight, shoulders relaxed, and feet flat on the floor. Alternatively, lie down if sitting is uncomfortable.
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## 2. Warm-Up: Nose Clearing (if needed)

If your nose feels blocked, clear it using this technique:

- Take a small breath in through your nose.
  - Exhale fully through your nose.
  - Pinch your nose with your fingers to hold your breath.
  - Nod your head or sway your body gently to distract yourself while holding your breath.
  - Release your nose when you feel the urge to breathe, and inhale gently through your nose.
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## 3. Main Buteyko Exercise

- **Relaxation Phase:**
    - Breathe normally for 30 seconds to settle into a rhythm.
    - Keep your breath soft, silent, and through your nose.
  - **Breathing Control:**
    - Breathe gently through your nose for about 3 seconds.
    - Exhale softly for 3-4 seconds.
    - Pause after the exhale, holding your breath for 3-5 seconds if comfortable.
    - Repeat this cycle for 5-10 minutes.
  - **Creating "Air Hunger" (*key to Buteyko*):**
    - Gradually reduce the depth of your breathing while staying calm.
    - Aim to feel a slight but tolerable hunger for air.
    - This step retrains your brain to accept less air and reduces hyperventilation over time.
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#### 4. Advanced Techniques for Specific Needs

##### 1. Anxiety or Panic Attacks:

- Use the **Control Pause** to quickly regain calm:
  - Exhale gently, pinch your nose, and hold your breath for 5-10 seconds (or as long as comfortable).
  - Resume breathing slowly through your nose.
- Focus on lengthening the exhale phase.

##### 2. Asthma or Respiratory Conditions:

- Focus on slow, shallow nose breathing to avoid over-breathing.
- Use the **Extended Pause**:
  - After a gentle exhale, hold your breath slightly longer (e.g., 10-15 seconds) to relax the airways.

##### 3. Exercise Enhancement:

- Incorporate nasal breathing into your physical activity.
  - For advanced training, practice holding your breath after an exhale during light exercise (e.g., walking or cycling).
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#### 5. Measuring Progress

- **Control Pause (CP):**
    - Perform a CP test daily:
      - Breathe out, pinch your nose, and time how long you can hold your breath until you feel the first need to breathe.
      - A CP below 20 seconds may indicate over-breathing. Aim for 30-40 seconds over time.
  - **Body Oxygen Level Test (BOLT):**
    - Similar to the CP but performed upon waking to assess baseline progress.
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#### 6. Regular Practice

- Practice Buteyko breathing for at least 10-15 minutes, 2-3 times per day.
- Aim to incorporate gentle nasal breathing into all daily activities, even during sleep (consider using a nasal strip or tape if mouth breathing occurs at night).