

# Breathing Strategies

It is normal to breathe fast when we are anxious – it is the body’s way to prepare for the fight, flight or freeze reaction. However, if we slow our breathing down it can help us relax and reduce our anxiety.

## Fast breathing

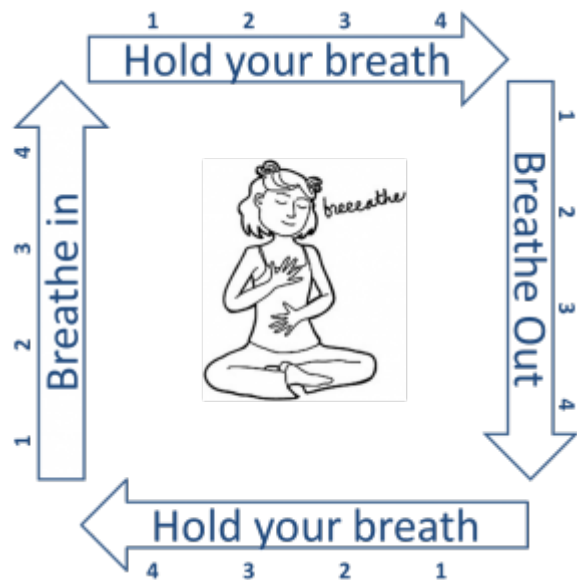
- Happens when we're excited or anxious
- increases oxygen in blood & speeds up heart
- means the body is ready for action

## Slow breathing

- Happens when we're safe and feel calm
- slows your heart rate
- means the body is calm and relaxed

**Square breathing** produces amazing positive results whenever you are feeling anxious, nervous, excited or fearful and you would like to calm yourself.

Can be used in exams or classroom and you can use the desk, a piece of paper or even a screen as a visual prompt for the square



Count 1 to 7

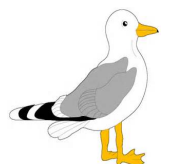
First, count from one to seven on each "in" breath . . .



Count 1 to 11

. . . then, counting at the same rate, count from one to eleven on each "out" breath

There are many breathing techniques for calming an individual down the 7/11 is the easiest to use and remember.



Another good technique is the 'one armed seagull' this is particularly useful when dealing with a panic attack as the flapping arm helps to distract from the panic

**All breathing techniques should be practiced when pupil is calm to ensure it is an automatic response when distressed.**