

Handout 2

Breathing Retraining Technique

Purpose of Exercises

- Slow down breathing
- Decrease amount of oxygen in blood
- With practice, decrease anxiety

Breathing Instructions

1. Take a normal breath in through your nose with your mouth closed.
2. Exhale slowly with your mouth closed.
3. On exhaling, silently say to yourself the word *calm* or *relax* very slowly; for example: *c-a-a-a-a-l-m* or *r-e-e-e-l-a-a-a-a-x*.
4. Pause, holding your breath, for a count of 4, and then take the next inhalation.
5. Practice this exercise twice a day, for 10 minutes each time.