

How to Quit Smoking by "Focusing on breathing"

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by Suryanarayana Chennapragada

I am sharing a proven technique called 'Focusing on breathing' to gradually get over the urge for smoking, without needing any other aids.

How can I do it? Try the following modes and use whatever works for you. Keep eyes closed whenever possible. Don't try to change the pattern of breathing except for the '911 mode'. Let the pattern change on its own.

Tip mode: Touch the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger. Breathe in, breathe out, three times, counting in the mind, when breathing out. During the first out-breath, count 'one', second out-breath 'two', third out-breath 'three'. Repeat the 3 breaths, at each of the next 3 finger tips. When you are at the thumb, place the tip of the index finger at the base of the thumb and breathe 3 times. Then switch to the other hand and repeat the practice. Continue practicing, switching hands.

Segment mode: Every finger has 3 segments, separated by 2 lines. Place the tip of the thumb at the top segment of the little finger. Breathe in and out once, *without counting*. Shift the thumb to the middle segment and breathe in and out. Move to the bottom segment and breathe in and out. Repeat the same steps at the next 3 fingers. At the thumb, place the tip of the index finger on its segments and breathe in and out once, at each segment. Now switch to the other hand and repeat the same practice. Continue practicing, switching hands.

Counting mode: While breathing in, feel the *faint coolness* inside the nose and on the top lip. While breathing out, count slowly in the mind. First out-breath, count 'o-n-e', second out-breath 't-w-o-o' and third out-breath 'thre-e-e'. Now repeat the same steps: count 'o-n-e' during the first out-breath and so on. Continue the practice as long as you like. Every time you lose focus on breathing or counting, get back to the practice, by counting 'o-n-e' during the next out-breath.

Feeling mode: When breathing in, feel the faint cool sensation inside the nose and on the top lip. When breathing out, feel the faint warm or neutral sensation at these places. You can also focus on the slight expansion and contraction of the abdomen, as you breathe in and out. Don't use fingers. Don't count.

911 mode: This makes a quick impact. Breathe in through the nose or mouth quickly. Breathe out gently through the mouth, with your lips only slightly open. Focus on the sensation at the lips and the bulging cheeks while breathing out. In this mode, the out-breath is slow and long.

Success stories

• *"I was smoking a pack and half a day. I was introduced to the 'counting breaths' mode. After just a week of doing the method once in the morning and right before bed, I was able to cut down smoking down to around 15 cigarettes a day, by doing nothing more than the method. I now do it throughout the day and I am down to about 4 cigarettes a day. I am now more relaxed, I don't need to lash out at everybody because I am not edgy. The best part is, it costs me nothing to do, and I didn't need any outside help like gum or patches. I did it on my own which is a great feeling."*

• *"Several days ago, while waiting to meet with my physician, I read a hand out about the benefits of 'counting breaths'. Out of curiosity, I tried several proposed methods, especially the 'Tip mode'. It seemed to relieve some tension. I was fascinated to test this techniques for 'smoking cessation' though I was at best skeptical. My first craving for a cigarette began shortly after my appointment. Instead of reaching into my pocket for a smoke, I tried breathing 3 times at each finger tip. At first, it was fast paced, nervous and a bit hurried. Within a few minutes not only did the craving stop, but I felt more energized. That was four days ago. I still have cravings, though less frequent, still conditioned to light up at certain times, but I count my breaths. It is so simple that even someone like me who has no patience and desires immediate satisfaction has found it an "easy does it" resolution to nicotine addiction. Try it just a couple of times and give yourself a chance. You will not be disappointed."*

More reports of success in quitting smoking as well as tobacco chewing are in [this link](#).

When can I practice this technique? You can practice it from the time you wake up in bed, till you again get into sleep, 16/7. This unique technique does not need any time allotment, place or posture and there are no rules or restrictions for the practice! You can use all those bits of time when your mind has no task to do. It will become a spontaneous habit in a few months. Then the practice gets triggered by itself, reduces stress and weakens the conditioned reflex of reaching for a smoke. Here are some proven ideas.

Lying in bed, trying to get sleep: Use this technique when you are in bed and wish to sleep. No more insomnia!

On waking up: Use it again as soon as you are awake but in bed. Continue till you feel fresh and then leave the bed.

Waiting: Wherever you wait, use this technique rather than feeling bored or impatient - stuck in traffic, standing in a line, sitting at the doctor's office, waiting for the computer program to load....so on.

Driving: Every stoppage at a red light is an opportunity for micro relaxation. While staring at the red light, practice the feeling mode till it turns green. Also use it during a traffic jam. No more road rage!

Traveling in Car / Bus / Train/ Air plane: Use this technique to pass time, relax and feel refreshed rather than fatigued at the end of the journey.

Walking: Use the 'Counting mode'. Every time a foot touches the ground, match it with the number being counted. Repeat that number, till the out-breath ends. For example: during the first out- breath, one-one-one so on.. In a few weeks, you can practice even while running!

Work Place: Whenever you lose concentration, your mind wanders, any part of body feels tight or you feel stressed out, take a breathing break. Break that stress cycle in just a minute or two!

Under stress: Practice specially the 911 mode when angry, anxious, panicky or in some pain, till you regain control over

yourself.

Good Luck in kicking the butt!

I would love to answer any questions and receive your feedback. My e-mail: csrao1003@gmail.com. Visit the web site www.countingbreaths.com for more information and testimonials. Read how it relieves some problems: *Insomnia, Anxiety, Chronic pains, Hypertension, Job stress, Migraine, Obesity, Panic attacks, Stuttering, Worry, Lack of concentration, Anger. Difficult relationships, Grief and more.*

The author Suryanarayana Chennapragada ('CS' in short) teaches Relaxation, Stress management and Meditation to adults and children from 4 years.