

3 Methods Your Breathing Can Improve Your Productivity

Our attention can be so absorbed at work that we can lose sight of our breathing. It can happen during times of pressure. It is possible to breathe in shallowly or with short, rapid gasps. It's not often we realize that the way we breathe influences our ability to stay efficient and enjoy our work. In this post I'll provide three breathing techniques to keep you focused and peaceful as you work.

1. Breathe Into The Urge

Writers who write about productivity frequently advise us to resist the urge to delay our tasks, however they typically do not offer any practical suggestions on how to do that. In my experience working with clients on issues of productivity, we often procrastinate when the thought of a painful sensation or experience-- anxiety or anger, for instance--comes up as you're at work, which we'd prefer not to experience it. It is important, in my opinion, some way to stay focused even in the face of those intense thoughts and feelings.

My personal experience has taught me that the most effective method in these situations is to take a deep breath. Instead of turning away from your task to engage in FreeCell or chat with instant messaging others, focus to what's happening while taking deep breaths until that uncomfortable sensation disappears. If you start feeling anxious when you're at work, for instance, breathe slowly and deep until your anxiety disappears. [Browse around here](#) to get a knockout post about abdominal breathing.

When we keep breathing regardless of our discomfort, often the difficult feelings we're experiencing seem accessible and less of a threat. In *Living with difficult people and Yourself* written by Dr. Miriam Adahan, she says, "When you breathe calmly and do your best, the muscles teach your brain it's safe."

2. Focus On Your Breathing

Zen meditation practitioners focus on their breathing exercises to remain alert and prevent their mind from wandering off in the past or worrying over the next. This method works for me, especially when I am lost in my work. Our breathing can help us get our attention back on the present moment and what is happening at the moment.

Teachers of meditation often state that this technique is effective because of the way our consciousness becomes present as we pay attention to what happens within our body. If I tell that you pay attention to the rhythm of your breath, you aren't going to be thinking about how you used to breathe five years ago. You'll instead focus upon the process and sensation of breathing right today. When your attention returns to the present, all memories and worries that may be bothering you disappear to the side.

3. Breathing Restrictions: What You Should Know

If you're feeling tense or uncomfortable as you're working, take a moment and notice how you're breathing. Are you breathing shallowly and quickly, through your throat or chest? The reason is that you're making it difficult to breathe through clenching your muscles. Certain people I've met are able to check their bodies frequently while working and discover they're hardly breathing at all.

When we aren't allowing our bodies enough oxygen isn't it no wonder that working feels painful and worrisome. If you find yourself breathing shallowly or in a restricted way, see if you can slow and increase the volume of your breathing and release the tension which is preventing the flow of natural breathing. If you notice this, taking your breath in a full and deep way while working will make it much easier.