

Three Breath Practices to Re-set Your Nervous System

A simple guide from Dawn Zentner, Somatic Experiencing® & Breath Therapist

Before beginning, spend 3–5 minutes simply observing your breath — in and out, relaxed and easy, without any attempt to modify what you notice. Come into a calm, grounded state of being. Practice these patterns regularly when you're feeling calm, so that when the pressure is on, the wiring is already in place.

Practice 1

Breath ratio

Breathing in and out through your nose, bring 70% of your inhalation into your low belly (beneath your belly button), 20% to your mid belly, and 10% to your chest. Let your belly expand — and say yes to a healthy breath.

Practice 2

Subtle resistance breathing

Breathing slowly in and out through the nose, create a very slight constriction at the back of the throat and exhale audibly — a sound like ocean waves, or a quiet (and loving!) version of Darth Vader. Subtle enough that someone could only hear it if standing very close to you.

Practice 3

Slow and extended

Breathing slowly in and out through the nose, notice your inhalation and exhalation and gradually invite them to match in duration. Slowly lengthen your exhalation — very slightly at first. Over time, work toward a 4–2–6 pattern: inhale for 4, hold for 2, exhale for 6. Only maintain this while you can remain calm and comfortable.

At any moment, your breath is right here for you. All you need to do is notice — and if you can focus a wee bit more, you can change how you feel, simply by using your breath.

Curious whether somatic or breath therapy could support you more deeply? I offer a free 20-minute consultation — no pressure, just a conversation. **Book at dawnzentner.com**