

Newsletter

How to Regain Control in 60 Seconds

The 4-7-8 Breathing Technique

Let's be honest. Day to day life in construction can be stressful whether you're on a building site, driving your van or working in an office the pressure can take a toll and sadly none of us are immune to that. The constant pursue of deadlines, snags, weather, budgets, clients, site politics can be an endless cycle feeling like theres no escape.

When juggling all of that its natural for your heart rate to spike, your jaw to tighten and your head to start racing. Most of the time, we just push through it. That's the culture but what if you had a reset button you could use anytime, anywhere?

You do... It's called the 4-7-8 breathing technique and it takes less than a minute to start calming your nervous system.

Here's how it works:

1. You **breathe in** through your nose for **four seconds**.
2. You **hold that breath** for **seven seconds**.
3. Then you **slowly breathe out** through your mouth for **eight seconds**.
4. **Repeat** that three or four times.

That's it. No equipment. No awkwardness. You can do it in the van, in the toilet, before a difficult conversation or lying in bed when your mind won't stop worrying about the day or day ahead.

Why does this technique work?

The reason the 4-7-8 pattern is effective is because it forces rhythm and control back into your system. The four-second inhale draws in steady oxygen. The seven-second hold creates a brief pause that interrupts automatic stress breathing (when you're under pressure have you noticed your breathing shortens and becomes quicker?). The eight-second exhale is the key part because longer exhales are directly linked to activating your calming system. Your body naturally relaxes when you breathe out slowly and fully.

In simple terms, 4-7-8 breathing works because your breath is one of the only automatic body functions you can consciously control. When you control it, you influence your heart, your hormones and your stress response. It is a direct line into calming your system from the inside out.

I must add that when I first started this technique I couldn't do it right away, weirdly breathing become challenging BUT its important to know that you can do shorter times and work up to 4-7-8. For example you can start where I did. I done 2 seconds breathing in, 4 seconds holding and 6 seconds breathing out and slowly over weeks built my stamina up. The main thing in life is starting, we all get better when we consistently show up for ourselves.

We often talk about mental health as if it's huge and complicated. Sometimes it is but sometimes it's about small, repeatable tools that stop things from spiralling. You don't need to fix your whole life in one go. Sometimes you just need sixty seconds to reset your nervous system and think clearly again.

Newsletter

The Art of Saying NO

Try it today. Before your next meeting. Before walking onto site. Before bed tonight. **Four seconds in. Seven seconds hold. Eight seconds out. Repeat.** No one even needs to know you're doing it.

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4-7-8 BREATHING TECHNIQUE



Breathe In

Hold for

Exhale for

4 SECONDS 7 SECONDS 8 SECONDS

RESET IN 60 SECONDS

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