



# Square Breathing Exercise

## What is it?

Square breathing can help you calm down when you're faced with a stressful situation or you feel overwhelmed. This works because it helps slow down your heart rate which helps reduce some of the internal stress signals that are being received. You can use this technique any time but it may be particularly helpful to use through the vaccine process. Especially if you're someone who doesn't like needles.

## Getting started

If possible, it is usually a good idea to sit in a chair with your back supported and both of your feet on the floor. Really feel the support of the chair and floor under you. While you're practising it may be useful to try this in a stress free and quiet environment.

## How to do it

- Begin by slowly exhaling all of your air out
- Then, gently inhale through your nose to a slow count of 4
- Hold your breath for a count of 4
- Then gently exhale through your mouth for a count of 4
- At the end of the breath, pause and hold for the count of 4
- Repeat the process a few more times

## Some Tips

- If you're new to square breathing, it may be difficult to get the hang of it. You may get dizzy after a few rounds. This is normal. As you practice it more often, you'll be able to go longer without the dizziness. If you get dizzy, stay sitting for a minute and resume normal breathing.
- It can be useful to use your finger to trace the outline as you get used to it.
- To help you focus on your breathing, find a quiet, dimly lit environment to practice box breathing. This isn't at all necessary to perform the technique, but it can help you focus on the practice if you're new to it.

