

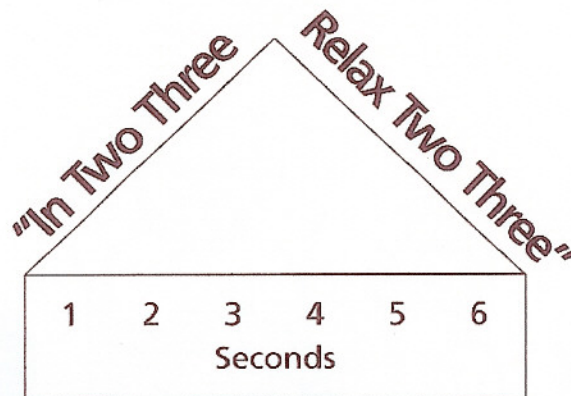
# Slow breathing exercise

Have you noticed that you are breathing too fast?

(A relaxed breathing rate is usually 10 to 12 breaths per minute)

It is helpful to practice this exercise 3 to 4 times per day so that it becomes easy to use as a *short-term coping strategy* during the times you feel anxious.

1. Time the number of breaths you take in 1 minute (breathing in then out is counted as one breath).  
Record your breathing rate here \_\_\_\_\_\*
2. Hold your breath and count to 5 (do not take a deep breath).  
When you get to 5, breathe out and say the word "relax" to yourself in a calm, soothing manner.
3. Start breathing in (through your nose) and out slowly in a 6 second cycle. Breathe in for 3 seconds and out for 3 seconds.  
This will produce a breathing rate of 10 breaths per minute.  
In the beginning it can be helpful to time your breathing using the second hand of a watch or clock.
4. Count to yourself:



5. Continue breathing in a 6 second cycle for at least 5 minutes or until the symptoms of overbreathing have settled.
6. After you have practiced this exercise, time the number of breaths you take in 1 minute.  
Record your breathing rate here \_\_\_\_\_\*

\*Once you have mastered the slow breathing technique you do not need to keep timing your breathing rate before and after the exercise.