



**ALYSSA MOORE**  
COUNSELING

## 4-7-8 Breathing

Breathing exercises are a way to help you feel more relaxed, relieve stress or tension, and feel more centered. Additionally, breathing exercises can help you tap into your body's relaxation response, which is the opposite of your fight or flight response. When you experience anxiety or panic the fight or flight response is triggered and can feel difficult to get out of. This exercise can help by releasing chemicals and brain signals that make your organs slow down and increase the blood flow to your brain.

This particular breathing technique involves holding the breath for a period of time, which allows your body to replenish its oxygen. To practice 4-7-8 breathing you will want to sit comfortably or lie down. Rest the tip of your tongue against the roof of your mouth, right behind your top teeth. You will keep your tongue in that position for the whole exercise.

Exhale all the air in your lungs through your mouth. It will probably make a whooshing sound since you are keeping your tongue in place.

Now, close your lips and inhale through your nose while you count to 4 in your head.

Then, hold the breath that you just drew in while you count from 1 to 7.

Now open your lips a little and exhale from your mouth while counting from 1 to 8 in your head.

Repeat this cycle at least 3 more times and work up to doing it for 8 cycles. The most important part of this exercise is holding your breath as that is the portion that will help to re-oxygenate your body, but the counting of the inhale and exhale are also important as that can act as a way to focus your thoughts. Make sure to practice this before you need to use it to calm your fight or flight so that you have experience with it.