

Breathing Exercises for Calm

Appiah Counselling – Breathe • Regulate • Restore

Gentle, structured breathing can help settle the nervous system and reduce feelings of anxiety, panic or overwhelm.

1. Box Breathing (4–4–4–4)

- Breathe in through your nose for a count of 4
- Hold the breath for a count of 4
- Breathe out through your mouth for a count of 4
- Pause for a count of 4

Repeat for 4–8 rounds, at a pace that feels comfortable.

2. 4–7–8 Breathing

- Inhale gently through the nose for 4 counts
- Hold the breath for 7 counts (only if comfortable)
- Exhale slowly through the mouth for 8 counts

This can be particularly helpful before sleep.

3. Hand on Heart Breathing

Place one hand on your chest and one on your abdomen. Breathe slowly, noticing the movement beneath your hands. You might add a reassuring phrase such as “I am safe in this moment.”

If you ever feel light-headed, pause the exercise and return to your natural breath. These techniques should feel gentle, not forced.