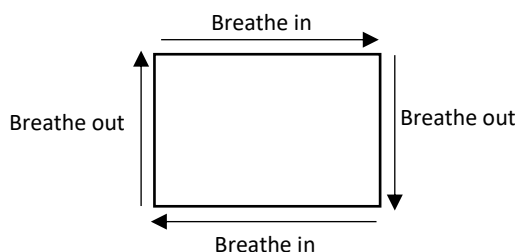


Keep Calm and Communicate!

Simple self-guiding exercises to help overcome feeling nervous, anxious or shy.

1. Rectangular Breathing Exercise

This simple exercise can be done wherever you are. Begin by looking around your surroundings and find an object to focus on which is rectangular; this may be a door, a window, a poster or a sheet of paper. The rectangular object is going to act as a visual aid for mindful breathing.



Using the above rectangular as an example...

Begin at the top left-hand corner and follow the length of the top line with your eyes as you breathe in. Use the line to pace your in-breath and stop once you reach the right-hand corner.

Hold the breath for a moment, then breathe out as your eyes trace the right-hand line downwards.

Continue this along the remaining sides and repeat as many times as needed.

2. Grounding yourself in the moment

This is a shortened example of how to use your senses as a way to ground yourself in the present moment. Guide yourself through the following questions.



What 3 things I can see?

Look around your environment and find three things to focus on, rest your attention on each of them briefly. Allow your eyes to soak in the colours, shape and intricate details of each before you move onto the next object or stage.



What 2 things I can hear?

This may be the sound of someone's voice, the roar of traffic outside, birds singing or music playing in the background. Tune into each individual sound source for a few seconds and notice how distinct they may become.



What 1 thing I can feel?

Turn your attention to an object you may be holding, for example a glass, a pen or a tissue. Notice the way it feels in your hand. For example, if it's a drink does it feel hot or cold in your hand? If you do not have an object to hand you can concentrate on the feel of the chair you are sitting on. Is it hard or soft? Feel the weight of your body resting upon it. If you are standing you can focus on your feet and the solidness of the ground beneath you.

Exercises kindly supplied by Roxy Birdsall, Trainee Counsellor and Student Advisor for the Listening Project
www.keele.ac.uk/listeningproject/