



Taking a Breath

By Andrew Cooke, [Blue Sky GPS \(Growth & Profit Solutions\)](#)

When you get stressed you need to be able to take a moment out to gather your thoughts and regroup. A good sign that you need to do this is when you find that your mind is busy "chattering". You are often physically, mentally and emotionally overloaded. You need to have a break but you may lack the time before your next meeting or appointment.

A good way to do this is through controlled breathing. The old advice of "take a few breaths" is well founded. Just take the following steps"

- Sit down somewhere comfortable and preferably quiet.
- Close your eyes.
- Let go of whatever is going on in your mind.
- Take a deep breath through your nose all the way into your belly, try not to breathe into your chest as you don't breathe so deeply.
- Breathe out slowly through your mouth. Exhale continuously until you can't exhale any more.
- Then breathe in again, and repeat the process four or five times.
- Open your eyes and breathe normally.

Take the time to do this every day. You will find that by doing this you are not only more relaxed, but your mind is clearer and has less "chatter" going on allowing you to focus and concentrate on your work.

Encourage your team to take brief breaks to do this, especially when they are very busy and not as productive as they would like to be. You can also help them to do this by building it into the start of your meetings – a good way to help people come to the meeting fresher, more alert and with the right intention.