

# 5 Step Breathing

This is a simple, yet very valuable, relaxation technique and you can pretty much do it anywhere.

If alone, try working through it with your eyes closed; it is ideal to do before falling asleep. It can also be done when others are around you as a way of regaining your energy and self-control.

First, simply breathe through your nose, slowly, feeling your breath in your stomach area. If you are breathing really effectively, you will feel your rib cage moving outwards rather than upwards. This takes focus thought and plenty of practice and may not be how you habitually breathe just yet.

Now, you're ready for the 5 steps:

## **Step One:**

On your in- breath, tense your toes, feet and lower legs, then release them fully on your out breath.

## **Step Two:**

On your in- breath, tense your knees, upper leg and bottom, then release them fully on your out-breath

## **Step Three:**

On your in-breath, tense your stomach, and then release it fully on your out-breath

## **Step Four:**

On your in - breath, tense your hands, arms, shoulders and jaw, then release them on your out-breath

## **Step Five:**

On your in-breath, tense every muscle in your body, release once on your out-breath, then see if you can release even more.

At any time, have a big stretch and yawn, as yawning gets rid of the excess carbon dioxide in your body, and prepares the way for fresh oxygen supplies through effective breathing. Just check first that your yawning won't offend those around you!