

# Ujjayi breathing

*Creativity applied to anxiety (Activity 10/12)*

## DESCRIPTION

Ujjayi breathing is a yogic breathing technique that is very useful for relieving anxiety. Ujjayi (pronounced oo-jai) is commonly translated as "victorious breath" and has been used for thousands of years to enhance the practice of hatha yoga. It is also known as "oceanic breathing".

Ujjayi breathing has its origins in the yoga tradition, an ancient practice that originated in India over 5,000 years ago. The term "Ujjayi" comes from Sanskrit and means "victorious" or "triumphant".

This breathing technique is mentioned in ancient yoga texts, such as Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, which were written about 2,000 years ago. Ujjayi breathing is also used in some forms of pranayama, which is the practice of breath control in yoga.

Ujjayi breathing has been passed down through the practice and teaching of yoga and has become popular around the world as a tool for improving concentration and mind-body connection during yoga practice and meditation.

## OBJECTIVES

Ujjayi breathing has several objectives and benefits including:

1. **Regulating the breath:** Ujjayi breathing helps to regulate the breath and maintain a steady rhythm. This can help improve lung capacity and oxygenation of the body.
2. **Calming the mind:** The rhythmic and gentle sound of Ujjayi breathing can help calm the mind and reduce stress and anxiety.
3. **Improve concentration:** By focusing attention on the sound and sensation of Ujjayi breathing, concentration and attention can be improved during yoga practice and meditation.
4. **Generate internal heat:** Ujjayi breathing can also generate internal heat in the body, which can help improve blood circulation and increase flexibility during yoga practice.
5. **Strengthen the respiratory muscles:** By using Ujjayi breathing regularly, one can strengthen the respiratory muscles and improve the ability to control the breath.
6. **In short,** Ujjayi breathing can be a very useful tool for improving health and calming down in a state of anxiety, as well as reducing stress and improving overall health.

## RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

To practice Ujjayi breathing, you don't need many resources. The main thing is to find a quiet and comfortable place where you can sit or lie down without distractions. In addition, you will need:

Comfortable clothes: Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes that allow you to move freely and breathe deeply.

1. A yoga mat: If you are practising yoga, it is advisable to use a yoga mat for comfort and stability during the postures.
2. A quiet place: Find a quiet place where you can practice without distractions, such as a quiet room or an outdoor space.
3. Concentration: Concentration is essential to practising Ujjayi breathing effectively. Try to focus your attention on the sound and sensation of your breath as you do it.
4. Patience and practice: Ujjayi breathing can take time and practice to master. Be patient with yourself and try to practice regularly to improve your technique.

## IMPLEMENTATION - INSTRUCTION

To perform the ujjayi breathing technique follow the steps below:

Preparation:

- ✓ Sit comfortably and inhale deeply through your nose.
- ✓ Exhale slowly, through your mouth, as if you are going to fog a mirror.
- ✓ Repeat several times to learn how to position the throat.
- ✓ Inhale deeply through the nose.
- ✓ Exhale slowly, reproducing the gesture of the throat preparation, but with your lips closed. You should feel a sound very similar to what you hear inside a conch shell.
- ✓ Repeat several times. Against anxiety, just breathe.

Whenever you feel anxiety trying to take over, just breathe. The more you internalise the exercises we have suggested, or others that you find and practice, the easier it will be for you to relieve anxiety.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jov2frxTRxo>

## POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

This activity can be done individually or in a group, or to produce a sense of calm before going to sleep.

Some possible modifications of the Ujjayi breathing that could be made to adapt it to individual needs are:

- ✓ Change the rhythm: Ujjayi breathing can be performed at different rhythms, depending on the individual's preference and need. If a more relaxing breath is desired, the rhythm of the breath can be slowed down. If a more energising breath is desired, the rhythm can be increased.
- ✓ Change the intensity of the throat contraction: The intensity with which the back of the throat is contracted in Ujjayi breathing can be adjusted to be softer or stronger, according to the needs and limitations of each person.
- ✓ Add a pause after the inhalation or exhalation: Instead of exhaling and then inhaling immediately, a pause can be added after the inhalation or exhalation to focus attention on the sensation of the breath.
- ✓ Vary the duration of inhalation and exhalation: The duration of inhalation and exhalation can be adjusted to suit individual needs. For example, if you want to slow your heart rate and relax, you can prolong the exhalation.
- ✓ It is important to remember that if you have a medical condition or physical limitation, it is advisable to consult a health professional before performing any breathing technique.

## EXPECTED RESULTS

It is scientifically proven that this technique can help to calm the mind and improve concentration, as well as stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system, which can reduce stress and anxiety.