



# Deep Breathing Exercises for Anxiety Relief – A Faith and Science Approach

## Understanding Anxiety and the Need for Peace

Anxiety is a common human experience – even faithful Christians are not immune. The Bible gently acknowledges our fears and encourages us to turn to God: *“Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you”* (1 Peter 5:7). Yet simply being told “don’t worry” may not remove the physical knot in our stomach or the racing thoughts in our mind. Many believers struggle with anxious feelings that dampen their joy, despite their deep desire to trust God. The good news is that God cares about **our whole being – body, mind, and spirit** – and He provides practical ways to find relief. In Scripture, the Apostle Paul’s counsel combines spiritual and practical advice: *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God”* (Philippians 4:6). Prayer is crucial, but so is understanding the physical side of anxiety. By addressing both our spiritual needs **and** our physical responses, we can better experience the *“peace of God, which transcends all understanding”* that *“will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:7).

**Anxiety’s physical toll:** When you feel anxious or stressed, your body enters *“fight or flight”* mode via the sympathetic nervous system <sup>1</sup>. This God-given response prepares you to face threats – whether an actual danger or a perceived one – and it comes with real physical changes: **muscles tense up, heart rate increases, blood pressure rises, and breathing becomes quick and shallow** <sup>1</sup>. These reactions are useful if you need to run from danger, but in everyday life they often only amplify our sense of panic. The more our body revs up, the more our mind becomes convinced something is terribly wrong, creating a vicious cycle of anxiety. Breaking out of that cycle requires activating the body’s opposite mode – the *“rest and digest”* state governed by the parasympathetic nervous system. One of the simplest and most effective ways to do this is through **slow, deep breathing**. In fact, research shows that *“effective breathing interventions support greater parasympathetic tone, which can counterbalance the high sympathetic activity intrinsic to stress and anxiety”* <sup>2</sup>. In plain terms, **slowing your breath down (especially using your diaphragm)** tells your nervous system that it’s okay to calm down. As one wellness article explains, *“slowing your breathing through your diaphragm switches your body from fight or flight to rest and digest,”* signaling to your body that it’s safe to relax <sup>3</sup>. The results are measurable: deep breathing tends to **lower heart rate and blood pressure** and release muscle tension as the body shifts toward a calmer state <sup>3</sup>.

## The Science of Breath and the Nervous System

Why is breathing such a powerful tool for anxiety relief? The secret lies in how God designed our nervous system. Breathing is one of the few bodily functions that operates **on the boundary between voluntary and involuntary**. Most of the time, we breathe without thinking – it’s automatic, like our heartbeat or digestion. But unlike our heartbeat, we can easily take conscious control of our breathing. **By changing our breathing pattern, we directly influence our nervous system’s activity.**



Modern medical understanding confirms what we intuitively sense when we “*take a deep breath*” to calm down. Deep, slow breathing (especially *diaphragmatic breathing* that engages the belly) stimulates the **vagus nerve**, a major nerve that runs from the brain to the organs <sup>4</sup>. The vagus nerve is the main highway of the parasympathetic nervous system – the system responsible for calming us down and regulating the stress response. When we breathe deeply, we send signals through the vagus nerve that “*tell the brain we are not in distress*,” which in turn **eases the body’s stress response** <sup>4</sup>. In the words of one family medicine doctor, “*Through diaphragmatic breathing, we stimulate the vagus nerve and send signals to our brain to activate the parasympathetic nervous system.*” <sup>5</sup> It’s truly fascinating that a simple act like controlled breathing can flip the body’s switch from high alert to relaxation.

Physiologically, taking slow breaths **increases oxygen flow, lowers the heart rate, and even reduces stress hormones** in the bloodstream. Exhaling slowly is particularly calming – long exhalations help activate the parasympathetic response that slows your heart and relaxes your muscles <sup>6</sup>. If you’ve ever let out a big sigh of relief, you’ve felt this effect. In fact, researchers at Stanford University found that a breathing exercise emphasizing extended exhalation (sometimes called a “physiological sigh”) for just **5 minutes a day** significantly reduced anxiety and improved mood in a four-week experiment <sup>7</sup>. Intriguingly, in that randomized trial, participants who practiced daily deep breathing exercises showed **greater improvements in mood and anxiety levels than those who practiced mindfulness meditation** for the same amount of time <sup>8</sup> <sup>9</sup>. This doesn’t diminish the value of meditation or prayer – rather, it highlights that **controlled breathing has a very direct, rapid effect on our bodies**. As one of the lead researchers noted, breathing is a unique lever we can pull to quickly influence our physiology and break the spiral of panic before it overwhelms us <sup>10</sup>.

From a Christian perspective, it’s remarkable to see how “*fearfully and wonderfully made*” (Psalm 139:14) our bodies are. God designed these autonomic systems, and He also gave us the ability to regulate them with something as simple as our breath. Our breath is literally the **gift of life from God** – in Genesis 2:7, God breathes into Adam’s nostrils the breath of life. Every breath we take is by God’s sustenance (Acts 17:25), and with each breath we have the opportunity to influence our mental and emotional state. This understanding doesn’t replace our dependence on God; rather, it invites us to cooperate with the way God engineered our bodies. By using breathing techniques, we steward our physical health, which in turn better positions us to pray and receive God’s peace. In other words, **calming our bodies can help open our hearts to the comfort of the Holy Spirit**. As Proverbs 14:30 says, “*A heart at peace gives life to the body.*” When our anxious physiology is quieted, our spirit can more readily sense God’s nearness and reassurance.

## Biblical Perspective: Breath, Spirit, and Calm

Breath has deep significance in the Christian faith. The Hebrew word “*ruach*” and the Greek “*pneuma*” can mean *breath*, *wind*, or *spirit*. Throughout Scripture, God’s breath represents His life-giving Spirit – from the Creator breathing life into Adam, to Jesus breathing on His disciples and saying, “*Receive the Holy Spirit*” (John 20:22). This connection between breath and spirit is a reminder that **our physical and spiritual selves are intimately connected**. When we struggle with anxiety, we want both our bodies and our spirits to be touched by God’s healing peace.

Christians throughout history have recognized this connection. In fact, **breath prayer** is an ancient Christian practice that combines slow breathing with prayerful meditation on Scripture. As one author explains, “*Christian breath prayers combine the practice of deep breathing with prayers of meditation on God’s Word to help calm your body while focusing your mind on truth.*” <sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup> Early desert monks in the 3rd and 4th



centuries, for example, used short repetitive prayers synchronized with their breathing as they sought to “pray without ceasing.” One classic breath prayer dating back to the early Church is the “Jesus Prayer,” based on Luke 18:13: “**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**” Believers would pray this in two halves – inhaling with “*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,*” and exhaling “*have mercy on me, a sinner.*” For centuries, such breath prayers have helped Christians draw near to God’s presence in moments of anxiety or agitation. Far from being a New Age or Eastern practice, **slow, contemplative breathing in prayer has solid roots in Christian tradition** <sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup> .

Why is this practice so effective for calming anxiety? It’s because it **marries two God-given tools**: the physical power of breathing and the spiritual power of prayer <sup>15</sup> . Deep breathing, as we’ve seen, can reduce the body’s stress response; prayer, on the other hand, brings our fears and needs before a loving God, aligning us with His peace. “*Breath prayers work as an effective tool for calming anxiety because they combine two powerful practices: breathing and prayer,*” writes Jennifer Tucker, a Christian author on the topic <sup>15</sup> . She notes that numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits of breathwork – reducing stress, anxiety, depression, and even insomnia – while prayer is our lifeline to the Lord’s comfort <sup>16</sup> . In a beautiful parallel, Tucker compares breathing and prayer to the rhythms of life: “*Breath has a rhythm... inhales and exhales. Prayer has a rhythm too – a cadence of inhaling God’s grace and exhaling our fears.*” <sup>17</sup> When we **connect breath and prayer**, we create a powerful synergy: “*We slow down our breathing because this literally calms our physical body, and we focus on God’s Word because this reorients our mind toward Christ,*” Tucker explains <sup>18</sup> . In doing so, “*breathing can help reset and realign your nervous system, [and] prayer can help reset and realign your soul.*” <sup>17</sup> The outcome is a holistic calm – “*a peace from God which transcends understanding*” (Philippians 4:7) guarding both *heart and mind*.

If you’ve never tried a breath prayer, a simple example is using the truth of Psalm 23:1. As you **inhale**, pray silently, “*Lord, You are my shepherd.*” Then **exhale** and pray, “*I have all that I need.*” <sup>19</sup> By repeating this slowly for a few minutes, you not only practice deep breathing, you also remind your soul of God’s faithful provision. Many people find that **combining scriptural affirmations with each breath** brings a sense of immediate peace. You might also use a short promise like “*Be still and know that I am God*” (Psalm 46:10), breaking it into two phrases for inhale and exhale. **Breath prayer is not a magic formula**, but a means of “*stilling our hearts*” (Psalm 131:2) and fixing our minds on the Lord, while our body simultaneously releases tension. It is one more way to “*draw near to God, and He will draw near to you*” (James 4:8) – with each drawn breath, we invite His presence into our anxious moment.

## Practical Deep Breathing Exercises for Anxiety Relief

Deep breathing techniques are simple to learn and can be practiced almost anywhere. Here we outline a few proven **deep breathing exercises for anxiety relief**. These exercises are widely recommended by therapists and doctors to help manage acute stress or panic, and they pair perfectly with prayer or scripture meditation if you desire. As you try them, remember to breathe **through your diaphragm** (belly) rather than shallowly from your chest, as belly breathing most effectively stimulates the vagus nerve and relaxation response <sup>3</sup> <sup>20</sup> . You can practice these techniques when you feel anxious, or incorporate them into your daily routine to build resilience. (*Tip: Consistency helps – one study noted that breathing practices have greater anxiety-reducing benefits when done regularly, e.g. at least six sessions a week* <sup>21</sup> .)

**Try these breathing techniques:**

1. **Diaphragmatic “Belly” Breathing** – This is a foundational exercise to engage your diaphragm. *How to do it:* Sit comfortably or lie on your back. Place one hand on your abdomen (belly) and the other on your chest. Inhale slowly through your nose, **deeply enough that your belly rises** under your hand (your chest should move only minimally). Then exhale gently through your mouth (or nose) and feel your belly fall <sup>22</sup>. Try to make your exhalation long and steady. Repeat this cycle for a few minutes, keeping your breaths smooth and unforced. Belly breathing may feel awkward at first if you’re used to shallow chest breathing – but with practice, it will become more natural <sup>23</sup>. This method increases your oxygen intake and has an almost immediate calming effect: as you breathe deeply into your belly, *“your nervous system calms and your mental clarity improves.”* <sup>24</sup> Many people use diaphragmatic breathing at the **first sign of panic** – by focusing on slow belly movements, you can prevent a full-blown panic attack. *(You can also pray a short verse in rhythm with these breaths, as described above.)*
  
2. **Box Breathing (4-4-4-4)** – Used by everyone from Navy SEALs to athletes, box breathing is a structured technique that helps **reset your breathing rhythm** and quiet the mind <sup>25</sup>. It’s called “box” breathing because it consists of four equal parts, like the four sides of a square. *How to do it:* Breathe in slowly through your nose for a count of **4** seconds. Hold your breath for **4** seconds. Then exhale through your mouth for **4** seconds. Finally, pause and hold (with lungs empty) for **4** seconds. That’s one cycle. Repeat the cycle about 4–5 times <sup>26</sup>. Keep the counting gentle (you can count in your head) and adjust the pace if 4 seconds is too long for you – the key is all four phases are equal length and done calmly. Box breathing forces you to breathe slowly and evenly, which sends strong “all clear” signals to your nervous system. It’s excellent for moments of acute stress; for example, if you’re feeling overwhelmed by bad news or preparing to walk into a stressful meeting, a minute of box breathing can steady your nerves. Even the popular TV show *Ted Lasso* highlighted this technique as a tool for panic attacks, which underlines how universally valued it is.
  
3. **4-7-8 Breathing** – This technique is a favorite for reducing anxiety **and** easing into sleep. The numbers refer to a pattern of inhaling, holding, and exhaling. Dr. Andrew Weil, who popularized 4-7-8 breathing, calls it *“a natural tranquilizer for the nervous system.”* <sup>27</sup> <sup>28</sup> *How to do it:* Inhale quietly through your nose for a count of **4** seconds. Hold your breath for **7** seconds. Then exhale forcefully through your mouth for **8** seconds (you can purse your lips and even make a soft “whoosh” sound) <sup>29</sup>. That completes one breath cycle; repeat the cycle 3 or 4 times. Because 4-7-8 breathing involves a longer hold and exhale, it can rapidly slow your heart rate. Be cautious the first time – it’s not uncommon to feel slightly lightheaded until your body adapts to the new rhythm. It’s best to do this exercise sitting or lying down. Many people find 4-7-8 especially useful at night when anxious thoughts are keeping them awake. By concentrating on the counts and elongating the exhale, your body transitions into a pre-sleep state. This technique, like others, works best if practiced regularly; over a few weeks, it can significantly improve your ability to relax on demand.
  
4. **“Cyclic Sigh” (Double Inhale Breathing)** – This is a newer technique backed by recent research, essentially mimicking the natural *sigh* reflex of the body. It involves a short “top-up” inhale added to a deep inhale, followed by a slow exhale. *How to do it:* Inhale through your nose until your lungs are comfortably filled, then **sip in a little more air** (a second quick inhale) to fully inflate your lungs <sup>30</sup>. Then exhale very slowly and completely through your mouth. You can do a couple of these sighing breaths whenever you feel a spike of anxiety – even **one or two deep cyclic sighs can induce calm**



<sup>30</sup> . Researchers found that practicing five minutes of cyclic sighing daily yielded **improved mood and reduced anxiety** after one month <sup>7</sup> . Even if you don't do it daily, this technique is great in the moment: for instance, after a near-accident or any shock, taking a couple of big sighing breaths helps release the tension immediately. It works because the extra inhale maximizes oxygen exchange and the long exhale purges carbon dioxide and triggers the vagal relaxation response.

These exercises are essentially tools to “*moderate the fight-or-flight response and feelings of anxiety*”, as one medical editorial noted <sup>31</sup> . They can be used proactively (to start your day in a calm state or build resilience) and reactively (to combat a panic sensation on the spot). **Best of all, these techniques are readily available anytime, anywhere – your breath is a God-given tool you carry with you.** It might feel odd at first to focus on breathing, but as you practice, you'll likely find you can enter a calmer state more quickly. Like any skill, start small and be consistent. Even **5–10 minutes twice a day of diaphragmatic breathing practice** can train your body to breathe more calmly by default <sup>32</sup> . Many people use a smartphone app or an audio guide (for example, the free app “Breathe2Relax” is recommended by some therapists <sup>33</sup> ) to help pace their breathing until they get the hang of it. Remember, these exercises are not about *perfection* – even if your mind wanders or you don't do it exactly “4 seconds” or “7 seconds,” any effort to slow and deepen your breathing is beneficial.

## Integrating Prayer with Deep Breathing

For Christians, an even more powerful approach is to integrate these breathing exercises with **prayer or meditation on Scripture** – effectively turning a breathing session into a time of communion with God. We discussed *breath prayers* earlier, and here are some practical ways to incorporate them:

- **Pair a Short Bible Verse with Your Breaths:** Choose a simple verse or phrase that is meaningful to you in combating anxiety. For example, “*Fear not, for I am with you*” (Isaiah 41:10) could be divided into “*Fear not*” on the inhale and “*for I am with you*” on the exhale. Likewise, “*Be still*” (inhale) / “*and know that I am God*” (exhale) from Psalm 46:10, or “*Jesus, Prince of Peace – give me Your peace.*” By repeating these truths, you **focus your mind on God's presence and promises** while the breathing calms your body. It's a full-person exercise: body, mind, and spirit.
- **Use a Breath Prayer during Panic Moments:** If you find yourself in a sudden wave of anxiety – your heart pounding and thoughts racing – try this: stop and take a slow belly breath while whispering a prayer like, “*Lord, help me*” or “*Holy Spirit, calm me.*” Then exhale slowly, “*Fill me with Your peace.*” This aligns with King David's approach in Psalm 56:3, “*When I am afraid, I put my trust in You.*” You are **actively shifting your focus from fear to faith** while also engaging the physiological calming mechanism of breathing. Many have found that this one-two punch (prayer + breathing) can shorten the duration of a panic attack or even stave it off entirely, as it interrupts the feedback loop of fear and replaces it with a sense of God's nearness.
- **Make It a Daily Ritual:** Consider setting aside a few minutes each day for a combined breathing-and-prayer meditation. Perhaps each morning before work, you sit quietly, do five minutes of diaphragmatic breathing and recite a comforting scripture. This can be seen as a form of Christian meditation – similar to how the Psalmist meditates on God's Word day and night (Psalm 1:2). You're effectively **training your heart and nervous system** to start the day in a state of peace, grounded in God's truth. Over time, this daily practice can increase your overall sense of spiritual and



emotional stability. It's like *"hiding God's Word in your heart"* (Psalm 119:11) while also regulating your heart rate with your breath.

Importantly, **breath prayer is not a replacement for other forms of prayer or for professional help when needed.** It is one tool among many in a healthy spiritual and mental health toolkit. Some days, you might just pour out your heart to God in a more spontaneous way (Psalm 62:8); other days, you might specifically use breath prayers to center yourself. And when anxiety is overwhelming, remember that seeking help from others is also biblical – we're called to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2), which can include talking with a pastor, a Christian counselor, or a supportive friend who can pray with you. In the next section, we'll discuss how deep breathing fits alongside other treatments and when to seek additional help.

## Embracing All God-Given Resources: Faith, Therapy, and Medicine

While spiritual practices and self-help techniques like deep breathing are very beneficial, sometimes anxiety can reach a level where additional help is needed. There is **no shame for a Christian to seek counseling or medical intervention** for anxiety. In fact, doing so can be a wise act of stewardship over your health. Just as you'd see a doctor for a persistent physical illness, it's appropriate to consult professionals for serious anxiety or panic disorders. God often works through skilled counselors, psychologists, and physicians as instruments of His healing.

Some Christians worry that relying on therapy or medication indicates a lack of faith, but this is a misunderstanding. Taking steps to get healthier – including using modern medicine – can be a way of cooperating with God's grace. One Christian counseling ministry addresses this directly, noting that **using medication for anxiety is not a sin or moral failure.** *"No, taking anti-anxiety medicines is not wrong because you are doing it to find relief and the ability to function at an improved level. This is a worthwhile goal and morally acceptable,"* writes Dr. Tim Allchin, a biblical counselor <sup>34</sup>. If a short-term course of medication or ongoing use of an antidepressant allows you to better engage in life (and in therapy, and in prayer), then it may be a provision from God for your situation. Of course, medication is not the only solution and doesn't *cure* anxiety by itself – it's typically one part of a comprehensive approach including therapy and faith-based coping strategies. But Christians should feel no guilt in utilizing such help. Remember Jesus' words: *"It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick"* (Luke 5:31). Seeking medical help when needed is an exercise of wisdom, not a sign of weak faith.

**Therapy and counseling** are also gifts to consider. A Christian therapist or a support group can provide tools for managing anxiety (such as cognitive-behavioral techniques) and help uncover underlying issues that breathing exercises alone might not address. Often, the most effective treatment plan for an anxiety disorder is **multi-faceted**: it might include learning relaxation techniques (like the ones we covered), practicing cognitive reframing of anxious thoughts, building a strong prayer life and supportive community, and possibly taking medication for a season. There is no one-size-fits-all answer – some people may overcome moderate anxiety through lifestyle changes and faith practices alone, while others with severe anxiety disorders might require long-term professional treatment. **What's crucial is to remember you're not alone, and God is with you every step.** As you pursue healing, whether through scriptural encouragement, deep breathing, or counseling, you can pray for God's guidance to use these resources effectively. Every positive step – from practicing a breathing exercise to calling a therapist – can be done *"in the name of the Lord Jesus"* (Colossians 3:17), seeking His grace in the process.





Finally, keep in mind that **persistent anxiety is not a sign that God has abandoned you nor that you lack faith**. Many devout Christians (including well-known pastors, missionaries, and saints in history) have battled anxiety or depression. King David, a man after God's heart, often cried out about his anxious thoughts (see Psalm 94:19, *"When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy."*). The apostle Paul admitted to arriving in ministry situations *"in weakness and fear, and with much trembling"* (1 Corinthians 2:3). These testimonies in Scripture show us that **faithful people can struggle with these issues**, and God's response is compassion. He provides comfort through His presence *and* through practical means. If deep breathing and similar techniques help quiet your body, that is part of God's comfort in action. If medication stabilizes you enough to receive God's truth, that too can be part of His providence. There is **no dichotomy between faith and practical anxiety management** – we are called to pray as if everything depends on God *and* act as if part of the answer depends on our cooperation.

## Real-Life Example: From Panic to Peace

Let's consider a brief real-world example of how a holistic approach (body and spirit) can make a difference. *"Jane"* (a composite of many true stories) is a 35-year-old Christian who loves Jesus and believes in the power of prayer. Yet, for years she has struggled with bouts of intense anxiety. She often wakes up with a racing heart and finds herself frozen with worry about her job and family. In her personal devotions, Jane would read Jesus' words *"Do not worry about tomorrow"* (Matthew 6:34) and feel guilty that she couldn't seem to obey that command. This guilt made her anxiety even worse, creating a cycle of shame and fear.

Finally, Jane reached out for help. She talked to a Christian counselor, who assured her that **anxiety is not a faith failure**, but a human condition that can improve with the right support. Together, they developed a plan: Jane would start practicing a **daily breathing exercise** combined with a short prayer, and she would also attend a weekly therapy session to process some past traumas that were fueling her anxiety. Jane chose a breath prayer from the Psalms to use whenever she felt panic rising. Each morning, she set aside 10 minutes to sit quietly. She inhaled slowly and prayed, *"The Lord is my light and my salvation"*; then exhaled slowly, praying *"Whom shall I fear?"* (Psalm 27:1). At first, it felt mechanical, but after a week she noticed that her mornings were getting easier. Over the next two months, Jane's progress was tangible: she went from having panic attacks **multiple times a week to maybe once a month**. On a 0–10 anxiety scale, she rated herself an 8/10 at the start; now she found her daily baseline around 3/10. On days that she did feel the familiar tightness in her chest, she immediately began her breathing and prayer routine, sometimes stepping aside at work for five minutes to practice. More often than not, this prevented the spiral from getting out of control. In her therapy sessions, Jane was also making strides – but she attributes a lot of her day-to-day improvement to the way **deep breathing and prayer kept her grounded in God's peace** between sessions. *"It's like I finally gave myself permission to use the 'tools' God has given me,"* she said. *"Before, I would just pray frantically that the anxiety would go away. Now I still pray – but I also breathe. It makes me feel God's peace in a very physical way."*

Jane's story illustrates that with practice and support, it is possible to break free from the constant grip of anxiety. Her faith is actually stronger now, because she no longer views her anxiety as purely a spiritual failing – she sees it as a challenge that she can face with God's help **and** practical wisdom. She still has occasional hard days (as we all do), but she knows *"the Lord is in her midst"* (Zephaniah 3:17) and she can actively recall that truth by calming her body and focusing her heart on Him.



## Conclusion: Every Breath an Invitation to God's Peace

In the journey toward overcoming anxiety and rediscovering joy, **deep breathing exercises are a gift that can aid us both physiologically and spiritually**. The same God who formed our inward parts and gave us breath (Job 33:4) also tells us *"do not let your hearts be troubled"* (John 14:27). He cares about our racing hearts and troubled minds. By using techniques like diaphragmatic breathing, we tap into the calming systems our Creator built into our bodies – effectively telling our hearts to "peace, be still." By coupling these techniques with prayer and Scripture, we **anchor our souls in God's promises** even as our bodies relax. It's a beautiful convergence of science and faith: medical research validates the power of slow breathing to relieve anxiety <sup>35</sup>, and spiritual practice infuses that physical act with eternal hope.

If you're a Christian struggling to live joyfully due to anxiety, know that the Lord has not left you defenseless. Along with prayer, fellowship, and maybe counseling, something as simple as mindful breathing can become a **practical weapon against the darkness of anxiety** – a way to *"take every thought captive"* (2 Corinthians 10:5) by first steadying your body and mind. Next time you feel anxious, remember to pause and breathe. As you inhale, imagine breathing in God's peace; as you exhale, cast out your cares and release them to Him. You may find that in those quiet moments, you experience the truth of Isaiah 26:3: *"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You."* Every deep breath can be an invitation to trust – a moment to say, *"Jesus, I trust You; fill me with Your peace."* With practice, **deep breathing exercises for anxiety relief** can help transform worry into an opportunity for worship, as you turn your focus from the storm to the One who walks on the waves. In this way, each breath becomes not just a biological act, but a spiritual rhythm of **receiving God's grace and breathing out His praise** (Psalm 150:6). Take heart that the God who breathed life into you will also breathe peace into your anxious soul, one calming breath at a time.

## References

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6. Jennifer Tucker – *“Breath Prayer: An Ancient Practice to Calm Anxiety and Strengthen Your Faith”*, Best Self Media (2025). Explores how combining deep breathing with prayer and Scripture has historically helped Christians manage anxiety, citing scientific benefits of breathwork and offering practical examples <sup>4</sup> <sup>18</sup> .
7. Biblical Counseling Center – *“Should Christians Use Anti-Anxiety Medication?”* (Tim Allchin, 2019). Addresses the question of medication from a Christian perspective, affirming that using prescribed medication to relieve anxiety and improve functioning is morally acceptable and can be part of wise treatment <sup>34</sup> .
8. The Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV) – Scripture quotations are used to reinforce concepts: e.g. Philippians 4:6–7, 1 Peter 5:7, Psalm 94:19, Psalm 23:1, Isaiah 41:10, and others as noted in-text. These verses highlight God’s concern for our anxieties and His promises of peace.

<sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> <sup>20</sup> <sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup> <sup>23</sup> <sup>24</sup> <sup>25</sup> <sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> <sup>28</sup> <sup>29</sup> Three easy breathing exercises to calm your body | Virgin Active

<https://www.virginactive.com.au/blog/articles/unwind-3-easy-breathing-exercises-to-calm-your-body>

<sup>4</sup> <sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup> <sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> <sup>17</sup> <sup>18</sup> <sup>19</sup> Breath Prayer: An Ancient Practice to Calm Anxiety and Strengthen Your Faith - BEST SELF

<https://bestselfmedia.com/breath-prayer/>

<sup>5</sup> <sup>7</sup> <sup>31</sup> <sup>32</sup> <sup>33</sup> Take a Deep Breath - PMC

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<sup>6</sup> <sup>8</sup> <sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> <sup>30</sup> 'Cyclic sighing' can help breathe away anxiety

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