



Relax

**FIVE QUICK TIPS FOR TAKING A BREAK AT WORK CO-AUTHORED BY: LISA JG WEIKEL AND RENEE BARIBEAU
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Feeling the fallout of a Toxic Meeting?

Personal power hygiene involves “keeping your side of the street clean” in all business encounters and negotiations. First and foremost, you are responsible for maintaining your own clarity and centeredness. Sometimes we forget that, and allow others to throw us off our game. Take a moment to clear yourself before entering a new environment. The last thing you want to do is drag the residue of one unpleasant encounter into the next.

Easy steps you can take:

1. B-R-E-A-T-H-E

Take the time to simply become conscious of your breath. Feel the breath coming in through your nose. Let it fill your chest cavity and move your breath down to your stomach. Let it fill your stomach and hold for as long as it feels comfortable. In the moment before you exhale, recall the feelings generated by your last encounter. Now, as you exhale, deliberately release that conversation or interaction, especially the feelings that were created. See yourself breathing in the light of the sun and allowing it to fill your entire body cavity. Breathe in light once again. Exhale with one good, forceful blow any remaining anger, anxiety, or discomfort.

2. D-I-S-C-O-N-N-E-C-T

If the meeting did not go your way or was perhaps even a bit unfriendly, you may need to take further action. After you have completed at least 3 to 5 cycles of conscious breathing, envision yourself standing in the sunlight on a patch of green grass. Using the outer edge of your dominant hand like a slicing tool, slice around the front of your body with the specific intent of breaking all ties to the encounter. Repeat the motion across the top of your head, and again around the top of your shoulders and upper back. (The back is susceptible to lots of clinging comments. Think about the term “getting stabbed in the back,” and how it often refers to something said. Well, this is a surprisingly effective method of clearing away any hurtful words that may have clung to you from the last encounter.)

3. P-R-O-T-E-C-T

Once you sense that all remaining threads from the last meeting have been cleared, take 3 to 5 more cycles of conscious breaths. As you are inhaling, (remember, try to bring your breath all the way down to your stomach – or even your toes!), visualize a bubble of pure white light being placed around you. Imagine this bubble to be a shield that protects you from the unconsciousness of others.

This entire process can be completed in under five minutes and you are now ready to proceed with your day! As you become more familiar with this technique, and see what a difference it makes in how you feel, you may want to make these three easy steps part of your morning shower routine. Washing off any

remaining debris from the day before and then encompassing yourself in a pure white bubble before you start your day feels great!

4. M-O-V-E

Begin by sitting up straight in your chair, with your eyes closed. Take a deep and cleansing breath, bringing air all the way in to the base of your stomach.

Keeping all your movements gentle and unhurried, scrunch your toes on both feet, holding it for five seconds, then release. (A good way to “count” the five seconds is to breath in, counting 1-Mississippi, 2-Mississippi, etc., while holding the “scrunch.” Then, when you release, exhale your breath, too.)

Tighten the calves of your legs, holding for five seconds, and release. Work your way up your body, continuing with your thighs, hips, stomach, shoulders. Each time tightening and holding for a count of five long seconds, and then completely releasing. Tighten your hands and arms. Tighten your fists, and then release. It's very important to remember your face. Tighten all your face muscles, hold, then release. Take a deep, deep breathe and then stretch. Notice how refreshed and renewed you feel, ready to begin your next project.

5. E-S-C-A-P-E

While continuing to breathe evenly, take another minute to let your mind travel to a warm sunny meadow. Visualize yourself sitting on a blanket, quietly enjoying the sounds of a spring day. If you listen carefully, you can hear the sound of a river flowing gently by. Birds are singing in the trees near the river, and big fluffy white clouds are passing by in the sky. If thoughts of work or deadlines creep in, let them float away with the clouds in the distance, knowing you will get to them soon enough. Listen carefully for the whooshing sound of grasses and leaves, brushing together in the gentle breeze.

Allow yourself to know, in this moment, that you are in perfect harmony with your world.

Take a deep breath and slowly bring your awareness back to your desk. Feel refreshed and renewed, and remember the whisper of the wind in the leaves.

One final thought!

Beyond the wisdom of taking care not to pollute your own thoughts and feelings, or later business interactions, with leftover anxiety, anger, or unpleasantness, it is also helpful to remember to shake off any energy that you may have picked up throughout the day before going home to your loved ones. They'll appreciate it, and so will you!

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