

Reflection #7
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Coping with the Fear of COVID 19 Infection - 4x4 Breathing Technique

You are at the end of your shift, you are very tired, and while taking off your face mask your hand touches your lips.....you feel that you are about to have an anxiety or panic attack. The most effective way to settle a panic or anxiety attack and to reduce the fight or flight response is to **BREATHE**.

The Canadian Special Forces and the Navy Seals use the **4 X 4 Breathing Technique** to stay out of the fight or flight response. This is the technique:

Step One: Take a breath in through your nose to the count of four.

Step Two: Hold that breath for the count of four.

Step Three: Breath out through your mouth to the count of four.

Step Four: At the end of breathing out, hold your breath to the count of four.

The **4 X 4 Breathing** helps us in the following two ways:

1. **Reduce B.P** (Blood Pressure) and **decreases Cortisol** – stress hormone.
2. **Reduce Panic** - Counting takes the focus off the panic producing situation and helps to cope and control your response.

Be proactive and do 4 X 4 breathing every hour and it will become an automatic response to stress.