



Dr. K's Guide to Mental Health

Practice | Kapalbhathi | Notes

Kapalbhathi means breath of illumination or fire. This meditation is focused on abdominal contractions with forceful, rapid exhalation and passive inhalation. It helps purify the mind and is useful for people in an anxious state.

Step 1: Abdominal Breathing

- Start by sitting up straight
- Breathe in and push your navel out
- Let the belly expand as you inhale
- Exhale and contract the abdomen

Once you've practiced abdominal breathing, now what we'll do is rapid, forceful exhalations by contracting our abdomen along with passive inhalation between the forceful exhalations.

Step 2: Kapalbhathi

- Forcefully exhale out of your nose at the rate of 1 exhalation per second
- Exhale out 9 short, forceful breaths, then rest
- You may notice that you passively inhale a bit of air every time you forcefully exhale
- Notice your breathing slow down
- Sit in the space created by meditation

You can wait until your mind returns to normal or alternatively you can time yourself for about 60 seconds. Slowly work your way up to 12, 15, 21, and eventually 33 breaths over the course of 2 weeks.

Towards the end of the 2 weeks, you want to do at least 3 sets of 33 breaths, along with 5+ minutes of silent meditation at the end.