



# Dr. K's Guide to Mental Health

## Practice | Ujjayi Pranayama | Notes

---

Our Vishuddhi Chakra, or throat chakra, governs our ability to effect change in the outside world. Ujjayi Pranayama is a foundational practice for activating our throat chakra. This is a good meditative practice for people who aim to accomplish things, and are meditating to become more successful in the real world. Scientifically, Ujjayi pranayama slows the rate of breath via contracting our throat. As we slow our breath, we engage our vagal nerve and parasympathetic nervous system.

### Practice 1: Darth Vader Breathing

- Breathe like you are trying to fog up a pair of glasses or a mirror
  - So contract your throat, squeeze it, and then breathe slowly through the nostrils
  - That contraction of the throat is the key to Ujjayi Pranayama
  - When done directly, you will hear an internal sound, a hissing, or sound like the ocean
- Notice what you are doing in your throat with the sound you emit

Do 9 rounds of Ujjayi Breath, then relax. Then do another 9 rounds, for a total of 3 sets (27 breaths). You can work your way up to 10-20 minutes of total meditation practice.

Once you have practiced Ujjayi breath for 2 weeks, you can attempt Khechari Mudra.

### Practice 2: Khechari Mudra

- Point the tip of your tongue towards the back of your throat
  - This will result in curling your tongue up against the soft palate
- Hold the posture for a few moments and then relax
- When you are able to hold it for a few minutes you can combine this practice with Ujjayi pranayama