

## Breathing

- Inhale by expanding your belly from the diaphragm muscle, drawing air as fully into lungs as possible, taking four slow counts for the inhale.
- Exhale by drawing your belly slowly all the way in toward your spine, pushing out every drop of air in your lungs with four slow counts for the exhale.

After settling into this breathing pattern, layer this on:

“As you exhale, think of one thing at a time that you wish to release from your life. As you inhale, think of those things you long to breathe in and restore in your life. Exhale frustration — Inhale peace. Exhale doubt — Inhale assurance. Anger — Love. Selfishness — Giving.” (Brazzeal, David. *Pray Like a Gourmet*. Paraclete Press, 2015, p. 73) You may repeat phrases or move to new ones in any mix that you would like.

- If it is helpful, you can make a list of each before you layer this on to your breathing to keep your focus. Consider using Psalm 23 as a starting point for some of the things you would like to inhale. Or use breathing with whatever scripture you are engaging today. See the example that follows.

Notes and modifications:

- Try different breathing counts. For example, you can inhale four counts, hold breath for seven, and then exhale for eight.
- For physical benefits, introduce kegels with breathing.
- This beautiful daily practice can be helpful for centering the mind on God and reducing anxiety. It is easy to do anywhere.

## Breathing Example Using Psalm 23

### Exhale (I release)

### Inhale (I draw in)

Self-reliance

My Shepherd

Scarcity

I have all that I need

Grasping for more

I rest in green meadows

Abandonment

He leads me

Craving

Beside peaceful streams

Weariness

He renews my strength

Self-driven pursuit

He guides me along right paths

Self-promotion

Bringing honor to his name

Distress

I am not afraid in the darkest valley

Anxiety

He is close beside me

Worry

His rod and staff protect and comfort me

Insecurity

Feast in the presence of enemies

Emptiness

He honors me by anointing my head with oil

Deficiency

My cup overflows with blessings

Clamoring

Goodness and unfailing love will pursue me

Uncertainty

All the days of my life

Desolation

I will live in the house of the Lord

Doubt

Forever

