

## **Energy Management Relaxation Technique Deep Breathing**

Breathing is key to achieving relaxation and is one of the easiest and most effective ways to control anxiety and muscle tension before, during, or after practice/competition. When you are calm, confident, and in control, your breathing is likely smooth, deep, and rhythmical. When you're under pressure and tense, your breathing is likely short, shallow, and irregular. Smooth, deep, and rhythmic breathing is an integral component of peak performance in sport.

**Quick Breathing Exercises** - These exercises can be used immediately before, during, or after competition to help lower energy levels that are too high.

**Mini Version 1:** Count very slowly to yourself from ten down to zero, one number for each breath. Thus, with the first diaphragmatic breath, you say "ten" to yourself, with the next breath, you say "nine", etc. If you start feeling light-headed or dizzy, slow down the counting. When you get to "zero", see how you are feeling. If you are feeling better, great! If not, try doing it again.

**Mini Version 2:** As you inhale, count very slowly up to four; as you exhale, count slowly back down to one. Thus, as you inhale, you say to yourself "one, two, three, four," as you exhale, you say to yourself "four, three, two, one." Do this several times.

**Mini Version 3:** After each inhalation, pause for a few seconds; after you exhale, pause again for a few seconds. Do this for several breaths.