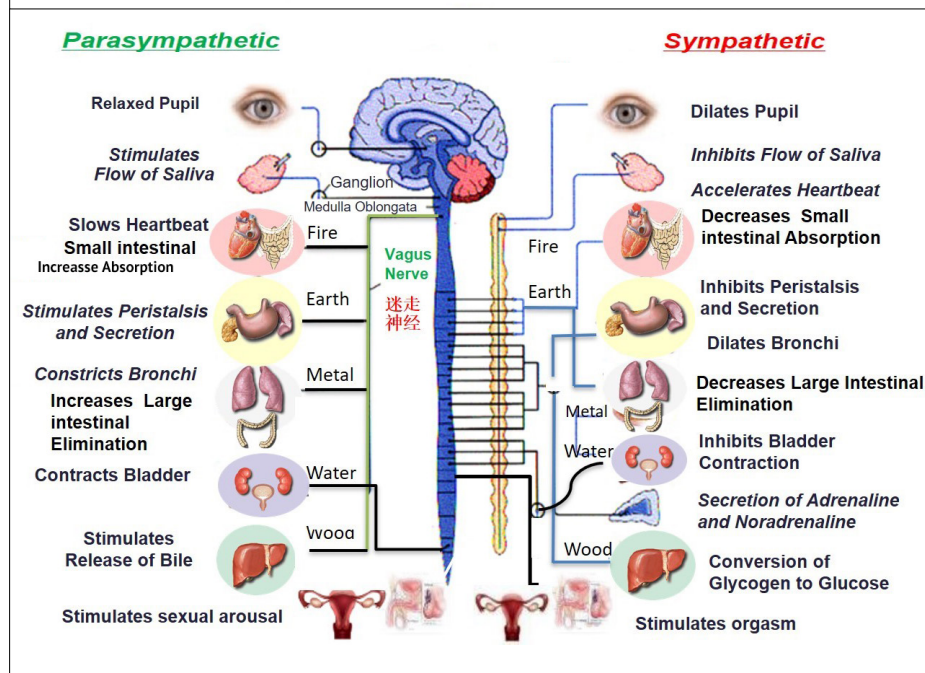


*The Parasympathetic promotes a "rest and digest" response, or "feed and breed"*

*The sympathetic promotes a "fight and flight" response, or "freeze and dissociate"*



## 2.2 Relaxed Breathing

When discussing relaxed breathing, it should first be noted that many people work at a computer with poor posture; furthermore, in their free time, they often watch TV or use their smartphones without maintaining an upright posture. In this hunched posture, the diaphragm's movement is restricted, and the lungs are not fully expanded and open.

As a result, lung capacity cannot be fully utilized for oxygen intake. Consequently, you become exhausted and tired more quickly. The abdominal organs are also somewhat compressed when the upper body is hunched over, causing them to work more slowly.

Therefore, maintaining an upright posture—whether standing or lying down—is the first thing to focus on. As soon as you take the first step toward an upright posture, you'll immediately notice that you're breathing more deeply.

To consciously practice relaxed breathing, adopt an upright posture, loosen up your entire body with gentle movements, close your eyes, and find a comfortable position. Inhalation should then occur through the nose and exhalation through the slightly open mouth.

Normally, deeper breathing sets in with relaxation; the two are mutually dependent. Then direct your attention to the abdomen, which rises and falls in rhythm with your breath.

To intensify the relaxing effect, follow a counting rhythm: count to 6 while inhaling through the nose, hold your breath while counting to 3, and exhale through your slightly open mouth while counting to 6. During the passive phase, the exchange of carbon dioxide and oxygen takes place.

In this way, you practice mindful breathing and fill a brief pause in the hustle and bustle of daily life with soothing relaxation.



<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/3DYlmY7B6bl>

## 2.3 Deep Abdominal Breathing

Once you are familiar with relaxation breathing, the next step to deep abdominal breathing is easy to accomplish. Posture and the nose/mouth rhythm remain the same. However, deep breathing is now accompanied by a conscious expansion of the abdominal wall.

Abdominal breathing is a breathing technique in which the diaphragm, a layer of muscle below the lungs, is used to inhale and exhale. During abdominal breathing, the diaphragm is activated and moves downward as you inhale, allowing the lungs to expand and fill with air. This movement also pushes the abdomen outward, causing it to expand. When exhaling, the diaphragm relaxes and moves upward, allowing the lungs to empty and the air to be expelled. This movement also causes the abdomen to contract and move inward.

Place your fingertips on the Tan Tien, the energy center below the navel. After a short time, you will notice how this center fills with energy and a gentle warmth.

Depending on your personal well-being and capacity, the counting rhythm can be extended to up to half a minute. It is important to pause between inhaling and exhaling, because during this time the aforementioned exchange between carbon dioxide and oxygen is most strongly stimulated.

It is quite helpful to briefly sit up straight and take a few deep breaths for refreshment during everyday desk work. If you supplement the breathing with wave-like movements of the spine,