



# nAMI Walks

## YOUR WAY

## Mindful Monday



### 1 Minute Breathing Exercise

The way you breathe can affect your whole body, increase anxiety levels, contribute to panic attacks, and even cause you to feel fatigued. Thoracic breathing (rapid, shallow breaths coming directly from your chest) can cause an upset in oxygen and carbon dioxide levels and trigger a stress response.

Diaphragmatic breathing (using the abdomen) produces deeper, fuller breaths, which can help send calming messages to your brain to relax.

**Here's a quick one minute breathing exercise you can do at any time of day to help you relax and relieve tension.**

- Find a quiet, relaxing place.
- Sit in a comfortable position.
- Set a timer for 1 minute.
- Breathe in deeply through your nose for a count of 4.
- Hold your breath for a count of 3.
- Slowly exhale through your mouth for a count of 8.
- Focus on your breathing. Feel your body as you inhale and notice your body as you exhale.
- Repeat this several times for 1 minute.

### NAMI Vermont Minute:

Physical distancing guidelines and restrictions due to COVID may contribute to people experiencing higher levels of stress, anxiety and feelings of isolation. While 1 in 5 adults will experience a mental illness or mental health condition in any given year, since the pandemic began, 1 in 3 adults have reported experiencing depression or anxiety. For people already navigating a mental illness, these times can cause even more challenges. NAMI Vermont is here for you to help you stay connected with others, even if being in person is not possible. We currently offer virtual support groups and classes for individuals affected by a mental health condition and their loved ones. You can email [info@namivt.org](mailto:info@namivt.org) or call 802-876-7949 to learn more or visit [www.namivt.org](http://www.namivt.org).