



STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES!

Jennifer E. Pollock, LCSW

“Stop and smell the roses!” is more than just a song or a nice idea. Breathing, specifically slow, deep, abdominal breathing, gives more benefits to our body, mind, and spirit than one may realize. But isn’t your breathing slow and deep enough already? Try this short test from Dr. Denise F. Beckfield in her book, “Master Your Panic and Take Back Your Life!”:

- 1) Sit or stand by a timepiece (clock, watch, phone) and breathe the way you usually breathe.
- 2) Count the number of breaths you take in sixty seconds. Don’t try to adjust your breathing.
- 3) How many breaths did you take? If it was more than twelve or thirteen breaths, you are probably breathing too quickly and shallowly for excellent health.

However, even if your breaths were below twelve, you could also benefit substantially from learning to do slow, deep, abdominal breathing. Dr. Beckfield’s chapter on both how and why to learn this skill is one of the best descriptions that I’ve found. Give it a try! Practice it regularly, and your health will thank you.