

- Respiration

Breathe your way through anger

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FROM running to cycling, hitting a punching bag, everyone has their own way of letting off steam when they're stressed or annoyed.



But there are also those who prefer to take the opposite approach, taking a deep breath and focusing on breathing or meditation to ease the pressure.

For a long time, these two contradictory approaches were both recommended for calming anger, but scientists have found that one method seems to be more effective than the other.

When it comes to anger management, there's a tendency to advocate both schools of thought — blowing off steam with a run, for example, or calming things down with breathing exercises, yoga or meditation.

But scientists have revealed which approach is most effective.

In a study published in the journal 'Clinical Psychology Review', United States researchers discovered that it's better to use a gentle activity to relieve tension than to vent anger through a more stimulating activity like a vigorous workout.

The results are based on the analysis of no fewer than 154 studies involving over 10,000 participants. The scientists realised that venting anger or stress by riding a bike or hitting a punching bag had no real effect.

Conversely, "turning down the heat" through yoga, meditation or breathing exercises can decrease feelings of anger, the scientists report.

And the good news is that this technique is likely to work for everyone, as the researchers found no distinction, for example, between sexes, or even between ethnic groups, cultures or ages.