

Breath-Based Relaxation

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International Association for Human Values (IAHV)

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Just Reeelaaaaaaxx!!!



What is Stress?



Demand

- Work
- Family
- Financial obligations
- Caregiving
- Relationships
- Goals and expectations



Energy

De-Stress



What is so important about the
breath?

Mind \rightleftharpoons Emotions \rightleftharpoons Breath



Alternate Nostril Breath (ANB)



- Close the right nostril by placing the thumb on your right nostril and breathe out gently through the left nostril.
- Inhale through your left nostril
- Close off your left nostril with the ring finger of the same hand
- Remove the thumb and exhale through your right nostril
- Inhale through your right nostril
- Close off your right nostril with your thumb
- Exhale through your left nostril
- Inhale through your left nostril
- Continue alternating 25-30 times

- When can you do ANB and how many times a day?
Recommended daily preferably in the morning and evening 3 to 10 minutes relatively empty stomach. Can be done during stressful moments, anxiety, panic attack or too much chatter in the mind.

Benefits of Alternate Nostril Breath (ANB)

- Excellent breathing technique to calm and center the mind.
- Our mind has a tendency to keep regretting or glorifying the past and getting anxious about the future. ANB helps to bring the mind back to the present moment.
- Works therapeutically for most circulatory and respiratory problems.
- Releases accumulated stress in the mind and body effectively and helps relax.
- Helps harmonize the left and right hemispheres of the brain, which correlate to the logical and emotional sides of our personality.
- Helps purify and balance the subtle energy channels, thereby ensuring smooth flow of life force through the body.
- Maintains body temperature.

Bellows Breath (BB)



- Step 1: Flex the arms to bring elbows close to the rib cage and loose fists close to the shoulders
- Step 2: With active inhalation raise the arms up above the head and open the fists
- Step 3: With vigorous exhalation bring the arms down to bring elbows close to the rib cage fists by the shoulder
- Repeat steps 1 to 3 consecutively, 15 to 20 times. That makes one set.
- Do 3 sets with a pause of 10 to 15 seconds between each set

- When can you do BB and how many times a day?
15- 20 breath in three sets is enough in a day. Before meals or two hours after eating. Great tool to use when you are tired or experiencing low energy levels. Avoid doing BB later in the evening.
- Contraindication: Pregnancy, uncontrolled hypertension, epilepsy/seizures, or panic disorder.

Benefits of Bellows Breath (BB)

- BB is a high-frequency mood-lifting breathing pattern.
- It activates the sympathetic nervous system which right afterwards really calms down.
- Over time BB enhances autonomic flexibility, reducing over reactivity to stress.
- It also activates brain association areas, the gamma waves become very prominent on EEG.
- The subjective experience is one of excitation during the breathing followed by emotional calming with mental activation and alertness.

Ocean Sound Breath (OSB)



- Take a slightly deeper than normal breath in
- With the mouth closed, breathe out through the nose constricting the throat muscles
- Gently inhaling and exhaling against this constriction creates a sound like the ocean waves rolling in and out
- When can you do OSB and how many times a day?
Recommended daily preferably in the morning and evening 3 to 10 minutes relatively empty stomach. Can be done during stressful moments, anxiety or too much chatter in the mind.

Benefits of Ocean Sound Breath (OSB)

- OSB stimulates the vagus nerve and controls the organs of maintenance (heart, digestion, breathing, glands)
- Additional benefits of OSB pranayama include diminished pain from headaches, relief of sinus pressure, decrease in phlegm, and strengthening of the nervous and digestive systems.
- OSB emphasizes the input from the viscera into the brain and dramatically changes how the brain is working
- Besides enhancing control of the vagus, OSB enhances the sensitivity of the brain and your vagus to the pressure in your arteries and to the subtle changes in oxygen and CO₂. That's very good for your heart and your tissue oxygen uptake.
- OSB brings subjective experience of mental and physical calmness with alertness.

SKY Breath



Sudarshan Kriya (SKY) Breath is a powerful yet simple rhythmic breathing technique that incorporates specific natural rhythms of the breath, harmonizing the body, mind and emotions.

The technique eliminates stress, fatigue and negative emotions such as anger, frustration and depression, leaving the mind calm, focused and the body energized, completely relaxed.

SKY facilitates physical, mental, emotional and social well-being.

Research on SKY and related techniques

- Reduces stress, relieves anxiety & depression
- Relieves and sustains improvements in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Reduces levels of biochemical markers of stress (cortisol and lactate)
- Increases levels of antioxidant enzymes (glutathione, catalase, and superoxide dismutase)
- Benefits the immune system and increases natural killer (NK) cells in cancer patients
- Increases EEG beta-wave activity, indicating increased mental focus/heightened awareness
- Increased levels of optimism and improved emotional regulation as evidenced by cognitive reappraisal
- Alters rapid gene expression in immune cells, indicating benefits on a molecular level

Workshops by IAHV

(www.iahv.org)

SKY Meditation (For civilians)

- 16 hour dynamic workshop with practical take-home tools and ongoing support
- **Course Sessions** – SKY Meditation workshop is taught over 4 consecutive days, in 4 hour sessions.
- **For details** – Contact Kirti Carter at kirti@iahv.org or call 210-816-1906

Power Breath Meditation (For veterans and Active Duty Military)

- 15 to 16 hour program with practical take-home tools and ongoing support
- **Course Sessions** - The Power Breath Meditation Workshop is taught over 5 consecutive days, in 3-4 hour sessions.
- **For details** – Visit www.pwht.org

SKY & Power Breath Meditation

- **Take Home Tools** – Learn a set of daily breathing practices that take about 20 minutes to complete. Some of the practices can be used as needed, day or night to reduce sudden anxiety, stress or insomnia.
- **Ongoing Support** - Participants are also supported through facilitated follow ups with their trainers, arranged either in-person or via teleconference (i.e. Skype).

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