

## BREATHING EXERCISES

### ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATH:

#### 1. Benefits:

- a) Has a marvelously calming effect on the nervous system.
- b) Helps to overcome insomnia.
- c) Relaxes and refreshes the body.
- d) Purifies the bloodstream and aerates the lungs.
- e) Soothes headaches.
- f) Improves digestion and appetite.
- g) Helps to free the mind of anxiety and depression.

#### 2. Technique:

- a) Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position with your back straight.
- b) Raise your RIGHT hand and place your ring finger against your LEFT nostril, closing it off.
- c) Inhale deeply and slowly through the RIGHT nostril to the count of 4.
- d) Close off the RIGHT nostril with your thumb and hold the breath for a count of 1-4.
- e) Open the LEFT nostril and exhale to the count of 4-8. The longer you can make the exhalation, the better. Concentrate on completely emptying the lungs.
- f) Breathe in through that same LEFT nostril to the count of 4.
- g) Close off the nostril with the ring finger again and hold to the count of 1-4.
- h) Exhale through the RIGHT nostril to the count of 4-8. This makes up one round.
- i) Repeat these rounds of alternate nostril breathing five more times, or for up to ten minutes if you are concerned about insomnia.
- j) Practice a ratios of 4:4:8, if at all possible. Increase this to 8:4:8 eventually, and then 8:8:8, after some months.

#### 3. Do's and Don'ts:

- a) DO practice the Alternate Nostril Breath whenever you need calming -- if you are nervous, upset or irritable.
- b) DON'T push yourself with the holding position or by increasing the ratio until you are comfortable doing do.
- c) DON'T make the breathing rhythmic, instead it should be smooth and slow. You can work on making it inaudible eventually.

The importance of this particular breath cannot be over-emphasized. The body and mind are closely interrelated and one influences the other to a much grater extent than medicine admitted to for many years. As an all-around soother, the Alternate Nostril Breath is incomparable.

### COMPLETE BREATH:

#### 1. Benefits:

- a) Purifies and enriches the bloodstream.
- b) Develops the chest and diaphragm.
- c) Strengthens lungs, thorax and abdomen.
- d) Increases resistance to colds.
- e) Calms the nervous system.
- f) Aids digestion.
- g) Clears up phlegm.

#### 2. Technique:

- a) Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position or in a chair.

- b) Straighten your back, which will open your thorax for easier breathing.
- c) Inhale slowly through the nose, consciously breathing deeply.
- d) Take five seconds to fill the lower part of the lungs, by expanding the ribs and pushing the abdomen out.
- e) Concentrate on filling the top of the lungs for the next five seconds. This will expand the chest and tighten the abdomen slightly.
- f) Hold the breath for 1-5 seconds.
- g) Exhale slowly until you have emptied the lungs
- h) Repeat 4-5 times.

### **3. Do's and Don'ts:**

- a) DO establish a rhythmic rise and fall of your abdomen, to promote regular breathing.
- b) DO attempt to breathe inaudibly after you have the knack of deep breathing.
- c) DO concentrate on your breathing alone, with your eyes closed.
- d) DO push your abdomen out as you breathe in and pull the abdomen in as you breathe out.
- e) DO give an extra snort as you exhale to rid yourself of stale waste-matter in the bottom of the lungs.
- f) DON'T slump. For maximum efficiency the thorax must be straight and open.

## **THE CLEANSING BREATH:**

### **1. Benefits:**

- a) Clears the lungs, sinuses and nasal passages.
- b) Relieves colds.
- c) Tones the nervous system.
- d) Strengthens the lungs, thorax, and abdomen.
- e) Purifies the bloodstream and clears the head.
- f) Aids digestion.
- g) Stimulates the liver, spleen, and pancreas.

### **2. Technique:**

- a) Sit in a comfortable cross-legged position or a chair, back straight.
- b) Inhale deeply, pushing the abdomen out, and taking in as much air as possible in the space of 1 second.
- c) With your hands, press your abdomen forcefully to expel the air through the nostrils.
- d) Inhale again by pushing the abdomen out and letting the air rush back into the vacuum created by the exhalation.
- e) The whole process, inhalation and exhalation should take not much more than 1 1/2 seconds. Both should be forceful and quite audible.
- f) Repeat ten times, follow with a complete breath and repeat ten times more.

### **3. Do's and Don'ts:**

- a) DO push the abdomen out as far as you can as you inhale
- b) DON'T exhale consciously, but let the action of the abdomen do it for you.