

Breathing for Balance NASAP 2010

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Organ Jargon

Lungs

The organs of respiration in humans. Humans have two lungs, with the left being divided into two lobes and the right into three lobes. Together, the lungs contain approximately the same length as 1500 miles of airways and 300 to 500 million alveoli, having a total surface area of about 70 square meters, roughly the same area as one side of a tennis court. Furthermore, if all of the capillaries that surround the alveoli were unwound and laid end to end, they would extend for about 620 miles (Notter, 2000).

Diaphragm

A thin sheet of muscle that extends along the bottom of the rib cage. During inhalation it contracts, creating a suction that draws air into the cavity. When the diaphragm relaxes, air is exhaled by elastic recoil of the lung and the tissues lining the thoracic cavity

Pulmonary Alveoli

Spherical outcroppings of the respiratory sites of gas exchange with the blood. Elastic fibers allow the alveoli to stretch as they fill with air when breathing in. They then spring back during breathing out in order to expel the carbon dioxide-rich air. The alveolar membrane is the gas-exchange surface.

Experiential exercise: three part lung exploration. Sending breath to the lower, middle and shoulder areas.

Experiential exercise: linking breath to natural step.

Holism

In addition to regarding an individual's life as a unity, we must also take it together with its context of social relations. (Ansbacher 1961)

The whole is more than the sum of its parts (Smuts 1961)

West and East

Breath-the air inhaled during respiration

Prana - Sanskrit word for "life air" or "life force"

China it is known as chi

Japan as ki

Polynesia as mana

It is present all over the universe both in macrocosm (space) and microcosm (bodies of living beings). Its proper flow in our bodies assures our healthy state.

Yama- restraint, control

Root Words

Hale- Old English refers to wholeness

Inhale- *latin* halitus, breath,

Halare- to breathe

Spirit- *latin* spiritus, or breath

Inspire- take in spirit

Scientific Definition of Inhalation: (also known as inspiration) is the movement of air from the external environment, through the air ways, into the lung cavity and alveoli (the mini cavity.)

Adaptive Purpose of Emotions: (Rasmussen 2003)

Depression: a justifiable opportunity to withdraw from a bad situation

Anxiety: serves to maintain vigilance. It is better to be on guard all the time than miss a perceived threat.

Physical Expression of Emotions

Anxiety:

A constriction of the breath

Shallow breathing

Tense muscles

Tight jaw

Vigilant or rigid posture, a lack of flexibility

Too much energy in the head, the brain, the mind.

Depression:

A lack of energy in the body

Stagnant energy

Slumped posture

Slow movements

A heavy heart

Breathing Exercises (Pranayama)

Inhale/Exhale Walk: Linking breath awareness to body movement	Balancing
Alternate Nostril Breathing (Nadi Shodhana)	Balancing
Bellows Breath / Bastrika Inhale arms up and above head, like a Y. Exhale and vigorously pull arms down and into sides of ribs. Repeat for 15-60 seconds.	Energizing
Alternative Bellows: Sit or stand Inhale arms above head, Exhale arms down, closing hands to fists Repeat 5x Inhale arms to cross, fingertips resting on shoulders Exhale chin down Inhale short breaths and holds Exhale loud and long Repeat 5x	Energizing
Three Part Breath Breathing Inhale: 1. Belly rises 2. Rib cage expands sideways 3. Chest /shoulders/ back expand Exhale: Let it go..... Repeat for 1-3 minutes	Calming
Oceanic Breath Ujayi breath/ <i>Imagine and imitate the sound of waves as they rush back out to the ocean, receding over the sand and pebbles. This is a visual tool that integrates sound as an aid to unify the breath and body.</i>	Calming

Practical Applications of Breathing/Pranayama Practice

Use daily routines to create a habit of awareness

Examples: walking to car, brushing teeth, doing the dishes, driving, laundry, etc.

Before going to sleep/ upon waking up: Three Part Breathing or other calming practices

Why encourage a daily practice.....Practice makes progress!

Where attention goes, neurons fire, and where neurons fire, they can re-wire. (Siegel, 2007)

Alignment: Balance is a dynamic state

When we are able to breathe through our whole body, sensing our verticality from head to foot, we are aligning ourselves with the natural flow of energy connecting heaven and earth." This increases oxygen intake, promotes efficiency in the entire breathing mechanism, revitalizes all the cells, tissues, and body organs and eliminates toxins. At the psychological level, it helps us relax, focus on our inner self and get "accurate and complete impressions" of our body, mind and soul. Soon, emotions and attitude will change and any negativity will lose its hold. Breathe_on, for if it stops, the body becomes inert. Life_ends. (Lewis, 2006)

Care of the Therapist Bonus Section / Two yoga poses for those who sit alot

Cat Cow Pose/ Marjariasana

The key to Cat-Cow is multiple repetitions. Move through the movement slowly and with awareness for 2-3 minutes. The repeated repetitions create a gentle massaging action, which increases the circulation to the discs between the vertebrae. This augments the suppleness and health of the vertebral discs and enhances the all-important cushioning action they create for the spine.

Legs Up the Wall Pose /Viparita Karini

Helps with circulation via reverse blood flow. Relieves tension in the lower back. This pose or any other pose that places the heart above the head is a great counter pose to the detrimental effects of sitting all day.

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BREATHING FOR BALANCE

Right side raises energy, left side lowers energy

BALANCING

INHALE 2 3 4 PAUSE 2 3 EXHALE 2 3 4 PAUSE 2 3

CALMING

INHALE 2 3 4 PAUSE 2 3 EXHALE 2 3 4 5 6 PAUSE 2 3

ENERGIZING

INHALE 2 3 4 5 6 PAUSE 2 3 EXHALE 2 3 4 PAUSE 2 3

Practice makes progress!

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