




National Myositis Assoc. Orlando 09/12

Breathing Awareness & Health



Breathing is the most powerful first step to improve health and transform reactions to stress to responses to stress

# Breathing rates per minute

- 16 to 24 bpm is considered normal range
- 12-15 is more appropriate for good health and stress management
- 6 or less breaths per minute is relaxed and restorative breathing, and an indicator of improving health

# Some Psychoanalysts believe

- That people actually immobilize their diaphragms in an attempt to contain fears, anger, aggression and other powerful feelings in order to keep them out of their consciousness
- Since psychoanalyst hold that the above emotions and how they play out in relationships, have strong origins and effects on our chakra energy centers 1, 2, 3

# Breath Practice must be applied

- It may be easy to monitor our breath when doing breathing exercises
- More Important is to apply the practice and monitor our breath when stress and difficult situations arise
- AS many of us have a pattern of constricting our breath adversely affecting, our energy, health, productivity

- Breath is the vital link between psyche and soma
- The breath reflects not only one's physical condition but helps create it
- The breaths rate, rhythm, its course and depth all affect how the body is energized

# Stress and Its effect on breathing

- Chronic shortness of breath and sighing respiration
- Chronic tiredness
- Depression
- Inability to concentrate
- Impaired memory
- Irritability
- Anxiety
- Various aches and pains
- Aggravation of symptoms of medical disorders

# Breath is

- Free
- Simple
- Accessible to all
- does not require a prescription or a copyright and is as effective as other treatments that do
- Very effective over time
- Has only good side effects



# Benefits of Healing Breath Work

- Improved Relaxation
  - Digestion, diaphragm movement assists peristalsis and massages internal organs
  - Mind body connection and awareness
  - Strength of diaphragm and intercostals

# Benefits of Healing Breath Work

- Strength of abdominal wall
- Improved blood and O<sub>2</sub> circulation
- Function of internal organs
- Cerebral spinal fluid flow
- Thoracic spine flexibility
- Oxygen to the brain for better function
- Stimulates immune system function
- Healthier skin

# Benefits of Healing Breath Work

- Helps to reduce .....
  - Unexplained chronic multi-symptom illness,
  - Insomnia
  - Depression
  - Panic disorders
  - Muscle tone in the body
  - Reactions to Stress
  - Cancer cannot grow in a well oxygenated area
  - Parkinson tremors are calmed by better breathing

# Exhalation

- No work is required to exhale
- Avoid pushing the breath out through pursed lips
- Not rushing the out breath provides enough time for the body to balance the CO<sub>2</sub>/O<sub>2</sub> mix in the blood
- Just relax and allow the breath to leave
- The system requires this momentary relaxation to keep the body from fatigue

# Expansion of the body with breath

- When the entire core body expands with breath .....
- the internal organs are massaged
- the ribs and spine open
- the semi-movable joints of the sacrum open
- Sternum lifts off the heart allowing space for heart expansion, also a massage like affect
- elimination is improved

# The Lungs are responsible for toxic cleansing of the body

- The Lungs are responsible for removing 70% of the toxins out of the body
- When blood enters the lungs it releases CO<sub>2</sub> and waste products from cellular activity to be exhaled
- The exhale is exceedingly important
- 19 % of toxins leave the body in sweat
- The remaining 11% of toxic waste is eliminated in urination and bowel movements

# Breathing with the Nose

- The left nostril is associated with the parasympathetic nervous system
- The right nostril is associated with the sympathetic nervous system
- Our body naturally switches breathing from the left to the right nose approximately every 1 hour and 45 minutes to 2 hours
- This pattern creates a balance of para and sympathetic nervous systems

# Left and right nostril breathing

- Right nostril breathing is more active, aggressive, more alert, and focused on the external environment
- Left nostril breathing produces a quieter more passive physiological state one more orientated to introspection and self awareness



# Breathing and the Nervous System

- To the degree that breath and breathing are restricted is the degree that every part of the nervous system is adversely affected
- When one experiences a relaxed diaphragm and it suddenly moves with breathing one will feel what is held in the belly
- It is common to feel emotion and have tears when this occurs

# Manage Stress, focus on Breathing When.....

- Before a meeting or presentation
- During or after a nerve racking encounter
- When your plane is late or grounded
- Stuck in traffic
- Waiting in line
- Got off at the wrong exit
- When family or workmates argue
- When the deadline is near and your printer breaks
- When the bank teller cannot find your account
- The computers are down
- List your own difficult situations to practice breathing

# Shallow High Chest Breathing can cause or worsen

- Fatigue, and difficulty sleeping
- Frequent illness
- Poor digestion, gas, constipation, diarrhea
- Hyper tension, edgy
- Lack of focus, unable to think clearly
- Low back muscle spasms
- Low back pain and difficulty walking
- Feeling of difficulty to take a big easy breath

# Hyper ventilators

- Loose the ability to contract the diaphragm
- Asthmatics do not exhale fully
- In anxiety breath becomes irregular

# Breath Practice

- The In Breath
  - If breath quality has been poor for a long time expansion may not be possible
  - relax and continue breath practice, the body will open to expansion and allow a full breath over time
  - the belly, ribs, back, sacrum, should expand
  - practice toward a 6 count breath in and out

# Breath Practice

- The Out breath
  - Begin with the out breath, the letting go
  - relax the belly, let it fall with breath
  - longer the out breath the greater the relaxation response
  - Pause allow the in breath to occur naturally