

ALTERNATE NOSE BREATHING TECHNIQUE

The heart and brain communicate through two pathways of the autonomic nervous system.

- **The Sympathetic Nervous System** is your body's "fight or flight" response. Many of the nerves connected to the sympathetic system are on the top of the lungs and when we take short, quick breaths, these nerves are switched on.
- **The Parasympathetic Nervous System** is responsible for the "rest-and-digest" body processes. Many of the nerves connected to the parasympathetic system are located in the lower lobes of the lungs and when we take long, slow breaths, these nerves are switched on.

These two systems need to be balanced for your body to be in a state of well-being. There is a simple and effective way to balance them called, The Alternate Nose Breathing Technique.

1. Place the thumb over one side of your nostril and the pointer finger over the other nostril.
2. Close one nostril and inhale through the other nostril very slowly.
3. Pause briefly then close the open nostril and open the other nostril to exhale.
4. Repeat three times and alternate breathing and exhaling through the opposite nostrils.

Inhaling through the right nostril activates the sympathetic nervous system (fight or flight) which speeds up circulation and also increases cortisol levels, blood pressure, and heart rate. When you need more energy or need to be more focused, try breathing in through your right nostril.

Inhaling through the left nostril has the opposite effect and is connected to the parasympathetic nervous system (rest-and-relax). This lowers blood pressure, cools the body, and reduces anxiety. When your mind is racing and you need to calm down or you can't get to sleep, try breathing in through your left nostril.