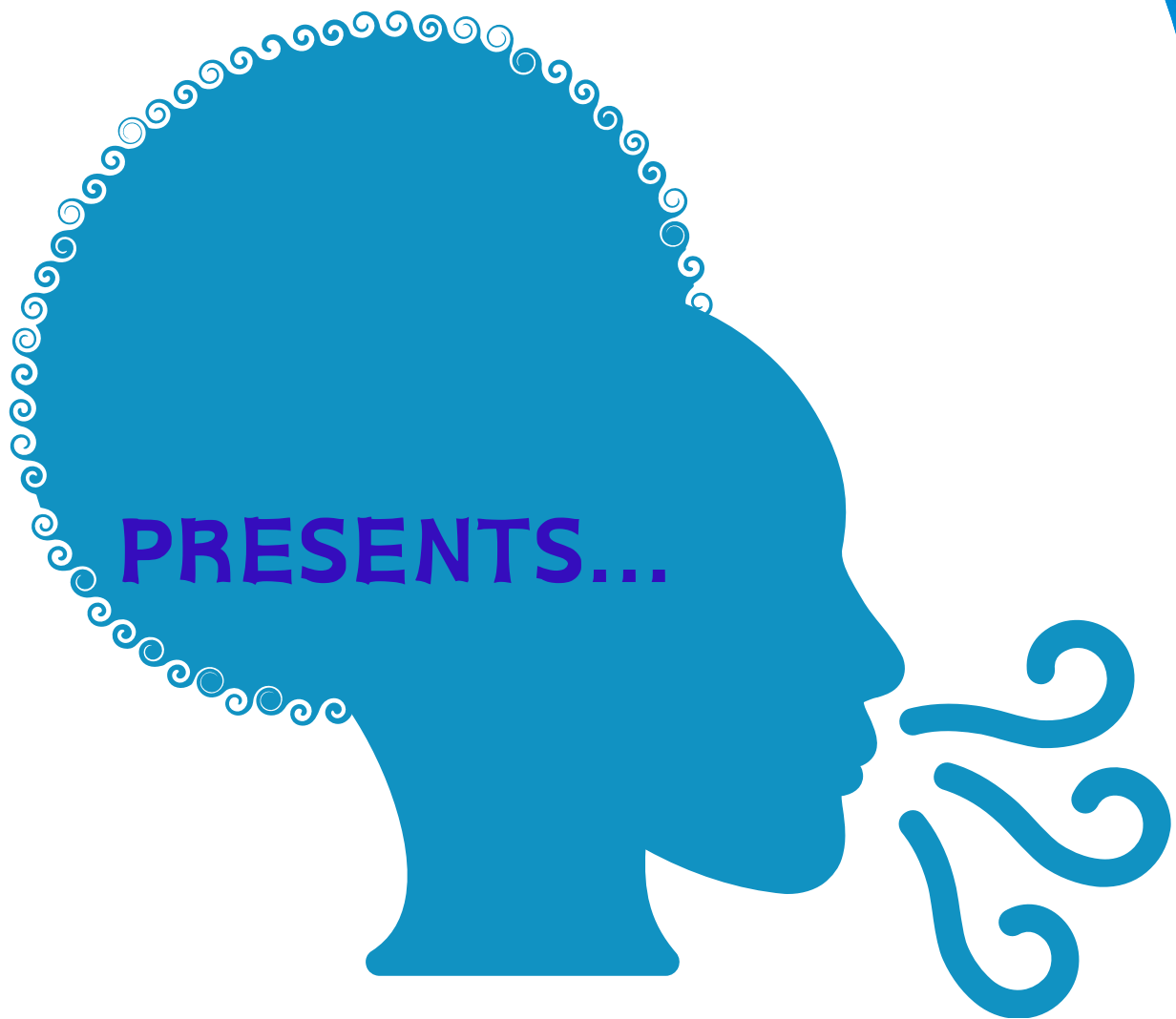


**A. B. F. A.
Breathwork Training
Ground**



**A Beginner's Guide
to Breath of Fire**

maliquaabreathafreshair.com

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A. B. F. A. BREATHWORK TRAINING GROUND GUIDE TO BREATH OF FIRE

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About The Author

"Breath is more than life it's a practice for spiritual elevation"

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My name is Malikah Underwood, and I love being me. I'm passionate about sharing knowledge that empowers others to make informed decisions about their health and well-being.

In 2016–2017, I became certified as an Integrative Nutrition and Health Coach through the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN), where I deepened my understanding of holistic health. I am also trained as a Yoga Teacher and am excited to complete my credentials as a Breathwork Facilitator. My journey is rooted in exploring the whole picture of health—mind, body, spirit, and soul—and I love to inspire curiosity, and self-discovery leading to authenticity, self-love, and personal freedom in others who seek the same.

With over 20 years of experience as a Certified Surgical Technologist, I've spent countless hours in the operating room. My love for biology and fascination with the human body continue to shape my career and approach to wellness.

I believe in celebrating the beauty of self-love and encouraging others to do the same. As a mother of two incredible daughters, ages 26 and 16, I know firsthand how important it is to nurture not only our physical health but also our emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Through sharing my journey and practices—involving nutrition, fitness, mindfulness, and spiritual growth—I aim to show others that loving themselves, being happy, fulfilled and free in their lives is in their control. I didn't always have guidance at the start of my wellness journey, and I am passionate about what I offer to others.

A. B. F. A. BREATHWORK TRAINING GROUND GUIDE TO BREATH OF FIRE

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1. Who

Intentional breathing for beginners

Overview of Breathwork

Breath of Fire and other breathing exercises can be beneficial for individuals seeking to enhance their mental, emotional, and physical well-being as well as for those desiring to align with the truth of who they are. These practices are beginner-friendly and suitable for those new to breathwork or looking for holistic methods to support their energy and focus. Although this is not traditionally considered a beginner breathing practice, it is accessible to beginners and those looking for holistic methods to support their energy and focus. With some intentional changes, you too can practice breath of fire as you build your knowledge of breathing practices also known as Pranayama.

Ensure you are in good health and consult a healthcare provider if you have any concerns.



10 ways to know if you are a beginner

01

You are new to intentional or structured breathing exercises.

02

You infrequently or never practice techniques like Pranayama, diaphragmatic breathing, or breath retention.

03

You find it challenging to focus on or control your breath for extended periods.

04

You've experienced shallow or rapid breathing in daily life and want to improve

05

You're unfamiliar with the connection between breathing and energy flow, emotions, or mindfulness.

06

You've never explored the physical mechanics of breathing, such as engaging the diaphragm.

07

You are unaware of the benefits or potential impacts of breathwork on your body and mind.

08

You feel unsure or lack confidence about starting a breathwork practice.

2. WHAT

Intro to Breath of Fire

Origin and what it is

What it is and where did it come from?

Breath of Fire is a dynamic and rhythmic breathing technique originating from yoga. It involves rapid, continuous exhales through the nose, engaging the diaphragm in short, powerful movements. This practice detoxifies the body through the immune system, boosts energy, and sharpens mental focus.

Breath of Fire, also known as **Kapalabhati** in some yogic traditions, originates from the ancient practice of yoga. Particularly within the Kundalini branch of yoga and Pranayama (breath control). The term "Kapalabhati" translates to "shining skull" in Sanskrit, referring to the practice's ability to energize and purify the mind, leaving practitioners with mental clarity and radiance. In Kundalini yoga, Breath of Fire is **regarded as a foundational practice**, often used to awaken the body's energy centers (chakras), strengthen the mind-body connection, and prepare for deeper meditative states.

This technique has been passed down for centuries as a powerful tool for self-transformation, emphasizing the role of breath as the bridge between the physical and energetic bodies.

3. WHERE environment & posture

Optimal Inner Environment

Hydration:

Proper hydration is essential for any breathwork practice, including Breath of Fire. Drinking water a few hours before practicing ensures your body is well-prepared and supported during the session. Staying hydrated helps maintain optimal oxygen flow, improves circulation, and reduces the likelihood of fatigue or dizziness, which can sometimes occur during breath-focused exercises. Avoid consuming large amounts of water immediately before practice to prevent discomfort from a full stomach. **Why It Matters: Dehydration can cause discomfort, dizziness, or fatigue during your breathwork practice. Staying hydrated also supports your body's natural ability to release toxins during the practice.**

Nutrition: Eat your last meal between 1.5 to 2 hours before practice.

If necessary, have a light snack like fruit, nuts, or a smoothie at least 30–60 minutes before.

Types of Food to avoid: heavy, greasy, or highly acidic foods before practice, so you do not experience cramps or even indigestion. Stick to light, foods if you need a quick bite.

When your stomach is empty or only lightly filled, your diaphragm can move freely without restriction. A full stomach can get in the way, making it harder to take deep, efficient breaths and stay in rhythm during your practice.

Follow these to create the optimal physical and energetic conditions for a fulfilling breathwork session.

Optimal outer environment

Seating: Use firm yet comfortable seating like the floor, a meditation pillow, or a straight-back chair, this will allow the spine to remain aligned and stable. With these, you will have a solid foundation to engage your diaphragm fully. Couches or beds are not recommended as their softness may cause your body to slump or compromise your posture, reducing the effectiveness of the practice and potentially leading to discomfort over time.

Posture: Keep your spine straight and shoulders relaxed. Focus on engaging the diaphragm while preventing other muscles from compensating for diaphragm weakness. Maintaining an upright, intentional posture is one of the most important aspects of Breath of Fire. A straight spine ensures the unobstructed flow of energy and proper activation of the diaphragm. Relax your shoulders, neck and jaw to release unnecessary tension and allow the chest to remain still, as the primary movement should come from your diaphragm.

Environment: Practice in a calm, quiet space with minimal distractions. Enhance the atmosphere with candles or soft music. If this is done before your regular meditation practice follow your usual setup for your space.



4. WHEN Timing & preparation



Preparation

Mindset and Intention: Read and understand this entire guide. Make your decision to practice. Set your intention for the outcomes (benefits) you desire to obtain and align to. Ideas: increase your confidence, cultivate peace, or release stress, energy for a task, etc.

Why it Matters: An intentional mindset can enhance the emotional and psychological benefits of breathwork. It helps you stay grounded and focused, especially as you start to learn the practice.

When to eat?

Complete meals 1 to 1.5 hours before practice to avoid discomfort and maximize focus.

Why It Matters: As a beginner, shorter sessions allow you to ease into the practice without over-exertion. Breathwork can be intense, especially for your diaphragm and lungs, so it's best to build endurance gradually.

How long?

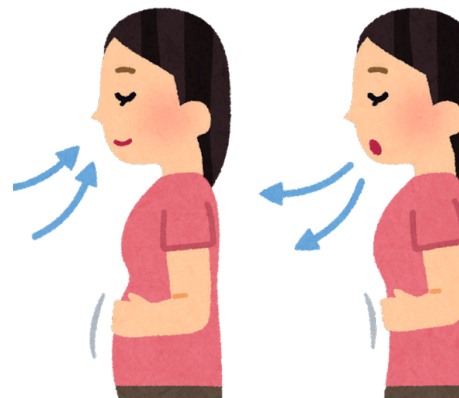
Session Duration: I recommend starting with 30 seconds and building up to 5 minutes. Start with (5) 30-second rounds daily and as you feel comfortable add another 30 sec. This is enough to begin familiarizing yourself with your breathing patterns and to avoid feeling overwhelmed. Do this until you get to 5 minutes. As you get more comfortable and confident, because you will be, you can extend the duration of your sessions.

How frequent?

Consistently: I recommend daily or every other day. Morning sessions are ideal for energizing your day, while evening practices can help you relax and reflect.

Is it ok to stop?

Yes, Listen to your body When practicing it is important to be aware of what your body is telling you. If you need to stop then do so. Then jump back in. Stay aware and appreciative of your body.



5. why

Benefits of this practice

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

Improved digestion

improve immune system function

Increase Energy

Clear out toxins

Reduce Anxiety & reaction to stress

Interrupt body disassociation

Help You to ground

ENERGETIC BENEFITS

Increase Confidence

Energize Solar Plexus

Clear Solar Plexus blockages

Increase Sense of Self Worth

make room for more of your authentic self to shine through

raise your vibration

help clear your aura

Performing this breathing exercise will surely strengthen you in every area of your life where you lack confidence. It will help you to make decisions with confidence and align you with what is for your highest benefit.

5. why

Benefits of this practice

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

strengthens the
diaphragm

Strengthen
abdominal muscles

improve lung capacity

Improve respiratory
efficiency.

boosts oxygen
enhancing vitality

reduce cortisol

Nervous system
regulation

ENERGETIC BENEFITS

prepare for deeper
meditative states.

Clear emotional
blockages

Clear energetic
blockages

Increase Sense of
Self Worth

strengthen the mind-
body connection

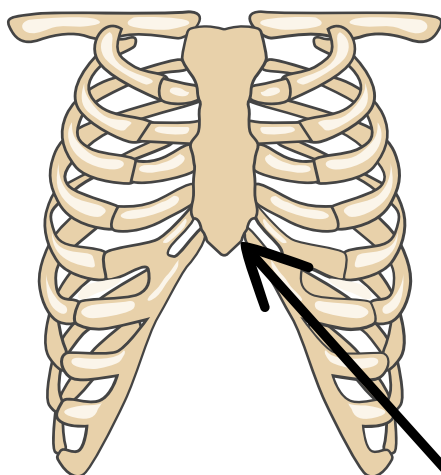
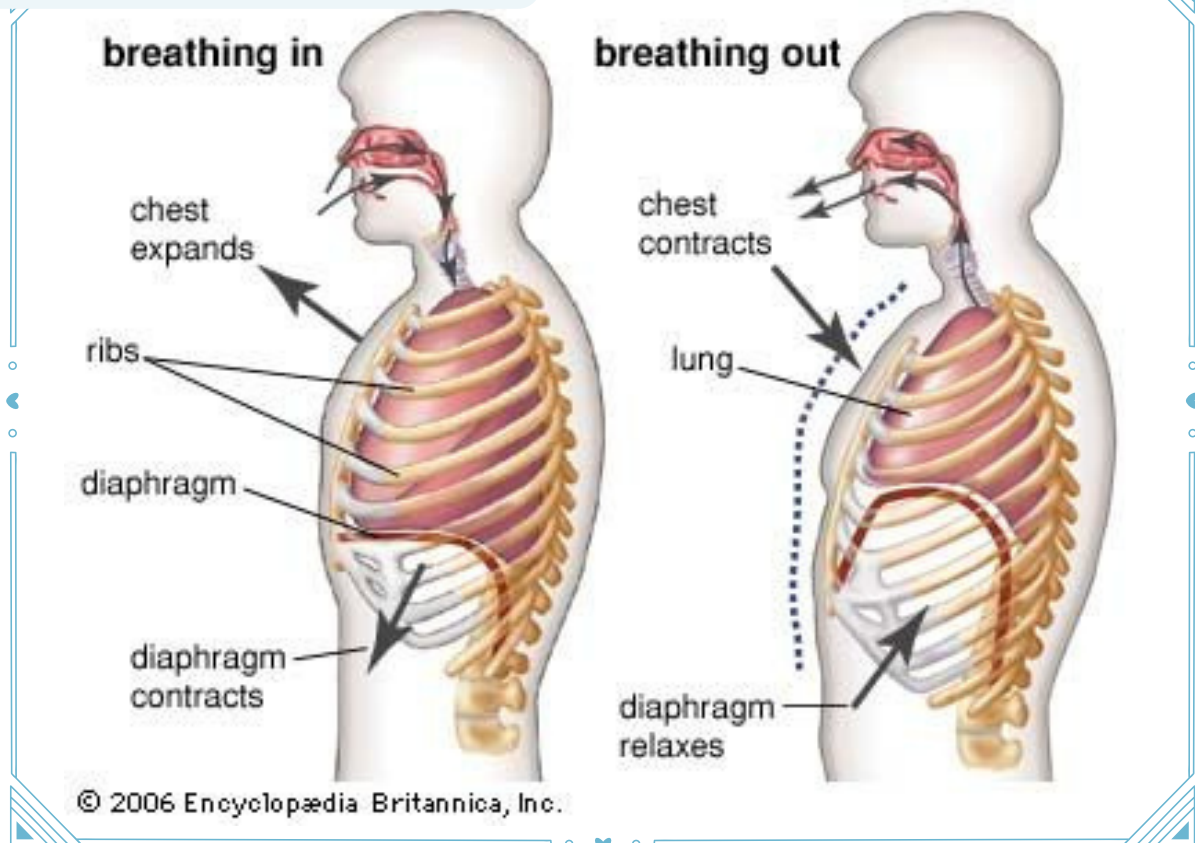
energy regulation

enhances mental
clarity and focus

This practice is designed to bring the body into a state of balance, awakening dormant energy (often referred to as kundalini in yoga) and aligning the practitioner with a heightened sense of awareness and inner power. Breath of Fire is often used as a preparatory practice for meditation, kriyas, or more advanced yogic techniques, making it a cornerstone of many holistic traditions.

6. how step-by-step guide

side view of the body



front view of the
ribcage

Study this visuals and see if you can locate your ribs where they meet at the base of your sternum, follow them to the sides of your body like in this diagram

BASE OF STERNUM

6. how step-by-step guide

Breath of Fire

1. Find a Comfortable Position and Seat: Sit cross-legged or on a chair with your spine straight.
2. Begin with Deep Breaths: Inhale deeply and exhale completely 3–5 times. Allowing yourself to relax your neck, shoulders, and jaw.
3. Take a deep inhale, and let out a little.
4. Engage the Diaphragm: exhale with short, quick breaths through your nose, focusing on exhalation. Allow the inhale to happen naturally.
5. Maintain a Steady Rhythm: This can be slower to very rapid. Gradually increase as comfortable.
6. Focus: Put your awareness on your diaphragm, you are in control of your breath. Isn't this cool!?
7. Remember 30 seconds and build up to 5 minutes



7. OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

Additional Tips and Considerations

Precautions for Beginners:

Go Slow: Don't force your breath or overexert yourself in the beginning.

Breathwork can sometimes bring up intense emotions or physical sensations, especially in the early stages. If at any point you feel lightheaded or uncomfortable, stop and return to natural breathing.

Avoid After Eating or Before Bed: After eating or just before bed might not be the best time for breathwork, as you may feel too tired or full to fully engage in the practice.

Consult a Professional: If you have any pre-existing health conditions, particularly related to the heart, lungs, or respiratory system, it's important to consult a healthcare professional before starting a breathwork practice. More on this later.

Why It Matters: Being mindful of your body's limits helps avoid injury or discomfort. Safety is the priority, especially when starting a new practice like breathwork.

Reflection: After your session, take a few moments to reflect on how you feel. Do you feel more energized, relaxed, or grounded? Journaling these feelings can help track your progress and identify what works best for you.

Why It Matters: Post-session reflection helps you deepen your understanding of the experience and monitor the progress of your breathwork practice.

Post-Practice Hydration: It's important to drink water after your practice to replenish fluids and support detoxification.

Why It Matters: Hydration aids in recovery and supports overall health.

Final Thoughts:

As a beginner, it's important to be patient with yourself and give yourself the grace to explore breathwork at your own pace. Each session is a learning experience, and over time, you'll develop a stronger connection to your breath, body, and mind and unique energy signature. With regular practice, you can experience the many benefits of breathwork, from stress reduction and emotional balance to increased focus and physical vitality and .

7. OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

Additional Tips and Considerations

Some things to be aware of

While breathwork is generally safe and beneficial for most people, certain individuals should approach it with caution or avoid specific techniques altogether. Here's a list of those who should ****not practice breathwork**** or should consult a healthcare professional before starting:

1. People with Severe Respiratory Conditions

- Conditions like ****asthma, COPD, emphysema****, or other respiratory diseases may be aggravated by breath retention or rapid breathing.
- Breathing techniques that involve fast-paced breaths (like ****Breath of Fire****) can cause shortness of breath or even trigger an asthma attack.

2. Those with Cardiovascular Issues

- Individuals with ****heart disease****, ****high blood pressure****, or a history of ****stroke**** should avoid intense breathwork practices, as they can temporarily elevate blood pressure or strain the cardiovascular system.
- Slow, controlled breathing may be safer for these individuals but still requires medical advice.

3. Pregnant Women

- Certain breathwork techniques, particularly those involving intense diaphragmatic breathing, breath retention, or rapid breathing, can be unsafe during pregnancy.
- Simple, calming breathwork may be beneficial, but pregnant women should avoid any practices that create abdominal pressure or stress the body.

4. Individuals with Epilepsy or Seizure Disorders**

- Rapid or deep breathing can alter the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the brain, potentially triggering seizures in those with a history of epilepsy.

7. OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

Additional Tips and Considerations

Some things to be aware of

5. Those with Severe Mental Health Conditions

Breathwork can sometimes surface repressed emotions or trauma, which may be overwhelming for individuals with conditions like: * PTSD * Severe anxiety * Schizophrenia * Bipolar disorder

If breathwork is to be practiced, it should be done under the guidance of a trained facilitator or therapist who specializes in trauma-informed care.

6. People with Untreated or Severe Trauma

Breathwork can bring up intense emotional releases or memories, which may feel destabilizing for those not prepared or without proper support.

Trauma survivors should consider starting with grounding and gentle practices guided by a professional.

7. Those with Recent Surgeries or Physical Limitations

Individuals recovering from surgery, particularly abdominal or thoracic procedures, should avoid breathwork that involves deep or forceful breathing.

People with physical limitations that make sitting or lying down for extended periods uncomfortable should modify their practice accordingly.

8. People Prone to Hyperventilation or Dizziness

Techniques involving rapid breathing (e.g., Holotropic breathwork, Wim Hof method, or Breath of Fire) can induce hyperventilation, dizziness, or lightheadedness.

These individuals should avoid such practices and stick to gentler methods like box breathing or 4-7-8 breathing.

9. Those with Retinal or Eye Conditions

Techniques involving strong abdominal pressure or intense breathing can temporarily increase intraocular pressure, which may be risky for individuals with glaucoma, retinal detachment, or other eye conditions.

10. Individuals with Fainting Tendencies

Breathwork practices that alter oxygen and carbon dioxide levels too quickly may increase the risk of fainting. Such individuals should avoid advanced techniques until cleared by a professional.

Congratulations!!!
You've completed
A.B.A.F.A.

Beginner's Guide
to Breath of Fire

What will you
do with
your new
breathing ability?



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