

BASIC BREATH SERIES



FIND YOUR SUN

JANEL JOSEPH

Basic Breath Series

This set gives you a quick lift in energy, increased clarity, and a sense of balance. If you do the minimum times for each exercise, it only takes 22-25 minutes to completely reset yourself. It is an excellent set for beginners. You learn the relationship to the breath and you observe the differences in emotion and thinking that each type of breathing creates.

Even though breathing is the most natural and essential thing we do, conscious breathing can be quite a challenge. When you alter the breath you begin to oppose and release the habitual patterns of emotion and attention that are coded in the habits of your body and mind. As those patterns begin to alter, you may drift in concentration or interest. If you continue and work with the breath, then you will gain a new sense of ease and control where you direct your mind. This helps increase better decision-making.

For all exercises, close the eyelids.

1. Left Nostril Breathing

Sit with the legs crossed.

Raise the right hand in front of the face with the palm flat facing to the left. The fingers of the right hand are together and point straight up. Press the side of the thumb on the right nostril to gently close it.

Begin long, deep, complete breaths through the left nostril. Inhale and exhale only through the left nostril.

Continue for 1 – 3 minutes.

To end, inhale and hold comfortably for 10-30 seconds. Exhale and relax.

2. Right Nostril Breathing

Sit with the legs crossed.

Raise the left hand in front of the face with the palm flat facing to the right. The fingers of the left hand are together and point straight up. Press the side of the thumb on the left nostril to gently close it.

Begin long, deep, complete breaths through the right nostril. Inhale and exhale only through the right nostril.

Continue for 1 – 3 minutes.

To end, inhale and hold comfortably for 10-30 seconds. Exhale and relax.

3. Alternate Nostril Breathing

Sit with the legs crossed, with the spine relaxed and straight.

Block the right nostril with the thumb. Press just hard enough to close the nostril. Keep the rest of the fingers straight up.

Inhale deeply through the left nostril. When the breath is full, bend the right hand into a "U" extending the little fingertip over to press on the left nostril. Close the left nostril and let the right nostril open by releasing the thumb pressure. (You can also use the thumb and index finger).

Exhale smoothly, and completely through the right nostril.

When the breath is completely exhaled, begin the cycle again with the inhale through the left nostril. Continue with long, deep, regular breaths for 1 – 3 minutes.

To end, inhale and hold the breath for 10-30 seconds. Exhale and relax.

4. Alternate Nostril Breathing

Repeat the previous exercise, except use the left hand to direct the inhale through the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril.

Continue with long, deep, regular breaths for 1 – 3 minutes.

5. Breath of Fire

Sit with the legs crossed.

Begin a powerful, regular, and conscious Breath of Fire.

If you have not done breath of fire, start with panting and even stick your tongue out like a dog.

Continue for 3 – 7 minutes. If you have not done breath of fire, start for 3 minutes with dog panting and move the exhale from out of mouth to out of your nose as you get use to the breath.

To end, inhale and hold the breath for 10-60 seconds.

Relax the breath. Notice how you feel.

Continue for 1 – 3 minutes.

6. Meditation

Silently meditate.

Continue for 3 – 15 minutes. Then inhale, exhale, and relax.

The quality of breath (Prana) processed through the two nostrils differs corresponding with the qualities associated with the two sides of the brain. The nerves going out from the two brain hemispheres cross at the level of the eyebrows. The left hemisphere is connected to the right side of the body and right nostril; the right hemisphere to the left side of the body and left nostril.

We breathe predominantly through one nostril or the other at any given time. The dominant nostril alternates rhythmically every 90 to 150 minutes. The length of the cycle reflects universal rhythms, individual temperament, and the personal state of mental and physical balance. The rhythm itself is mediated mainly through structures in the hypothalamus and pituitary, though other areas in the brain are also involved.

You may use the technique of inhaling and exhaling exclusively through either the left or right nostril in order to benefit from the quality associated with that nostril. For instance, breathe exclusively through the left nostril to deal with compulsive eating habits.

Breathing through the left nostril is associated with:

Calmness

Empathy

Sensitivity

Synthesis

Breathing through the right nostril is associated with:

Vigor

Alertness

Will power

Concentration

Readiness for action