Breath Balance

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PURPOSE

SELF MANAGEMENT

- Develop awareness of your Breath.
- Calm the mind and the nervous system.
- Develop vitality and deepen your connection with yourself.

MATERIALS

- mat, blanket, cushions or chair if seated

PREPARATION

- Practice this activity when you feel in a relaxed state so you can follow the process without tensions. If you have any breathing or respiratory issues, consult with a specialist first.

INTRO

Supports the regulation of the breathing cycles if repeated on a regular basis.

BREATH BALANCE

STEPS

1. Lie down and take a few moments to settle your body. It is important to be as comfortable and relaxed as possible. Pay attention to your breath, what do you notice? Eg. do you pay more attention to your inhalation or exaltation? And where in your body is your breath traveling to?

2. After a few minutes, place your hands on your upper chest with elbows resting on the floor. Take 3 - 5 breaths and imagine that you can direct your breath to the area under your hands as if filling up a balloon.

3. Then, move the hands down to the lower belly. Take 3-5 breaths directing your breath to the area under your hands, sensing the movement of the belly.

4. Then, move the hands to the lower rib cage, side of the ribs, with the thumbs pointing toward the back of the body, fingers toward the front. Apply slight pressure to the side ribs, and direct your breath into it. Take 3-5 breaths directing your breath to the area under your hands.



5. Then place one hand on the lower belly and one hand on the upper chest. Take 3-5 breaths into both the upper and lower parts. Notice how this is for you, can you have equal breath moving into both the upper and lower areas?

6. Finally relax the arms to the sides, allow the breath to settle and notice if anything has changed in your breath pattern. Then rest your attention for a few minutes.

7. (Optional) Take a few minutes to move freely, experiencing any changes in your body, breath or movement.

REFLECTION

- What did you notice about your breath before you began the exercise?
- What was the experience of breathing into the different areas of the lungs and directing your breath?
- How do you think practicing this exercise can lead to resilience building?

COMMENTS

• In order to gain the many health benefits of this exercise it is best to practice on a regular basis. • An optional development is to direct the breath into different parts of the body imagining the tissues under your skin are breathing. • An easy exercise to integrate into your movement or self-care practice.