



Breathing Exercise to Improve Your Body & Mind

by
Peter Field

Very few of us spend much time consciously controlling our breathing.

Indeed, for most people, breathing tends to be an automatic process that takes place unconsciously. Unfortunately, this includes unhealthy breathing.

Most of us are well aware of our body's need for oxygen. Without it we would very quickly become unconscious and die.

But contrary to popular belief, carbon dioxide is just as essential to life as oxygen.

When we breathe incorrectly, we reduce the amount of carbon dioxide available to us and this can have a profound and harmful effect on our body - and our mind.

You see, if there is insufficient carbon dioxide in the blood, it creates 'alkaline blood', which causes a constriction of the blood vessels.

And this in turn allows less oxygen to reach the vital organs.

Incorrect breathing that decreases the carbon dioxide available to our bodies can cause a whole range of health problems.

Amongst these are heart or cardiac problems including palpitations and 'angina'.

The respiratory functions can also be adversely affected, resulting in shortness of breath, 'asthma' or chest pain. Also, muscular cramps, tremors and fibrositis may be experienced

As if this weren't enough, psychologically speaking, incorrect breathing that limits the amount of carbon dioxide available can create real tension, anxiety, sleep disturbances and a lack of concentration. All of these things are good reasons for you to learn how to breathe in a proper and healthy way. Here's a simple 5 step approach to healthy breathing.

1. Inhale and exhale through the nose whenever possible, even during physical exercise. Because the nostrils are much smaller than the mouth, the volume of air is reduced.

2. Change from breathing with the chest to breathing with the abdomen or belly. An easy way to do this is to relax in a chair, put one hand on your tummy and the other on your chest and then breathe so that the hand on your chest hardly moves while the hand on your stomach rises and falls gently.

Once you have mastered this way of breathing, work on doing it while standing and then move on to learning how to use it when walking and moving around.

3. Focus on making your breathing shallow. Try to minimise the movement of the hand resting on your tummy.

4. Make your breathing slow in order to minimise your breathing. The aim is to breathe around 6 to 8 breaths per minute - or about 1 every 10 seconds.

5. Work on developing a steady rhythm. This will cause you to stop holding your breath for irregular periods and then 'sighing'.

Practice breathing like this for a minimum of 3 times a day for at least 10 minutes.

Be patient!

It takes time to change anything as entrenched as our breathing habits, but with persistence you can certainly do it.

The effort really is worthwhile and, as the supply of oxygen to your body's vital organs improves so will your physical - and psychological health.

Peter Field is a leading British hypno-psychotherapist and originator of AIROTherapy™ with practices in Birmingham and London, UK. He is the author of numerous articles on psychotherapy, hypnosis and health and his articles are currently published internationally by more than 200 different websites. He is a Member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy and Fellow of the Royal Society of Health. For more of his interesting and informative articles visit his website:

<http://www.peterfieldhypnotherapy.co.uk>

For permission to reproduce this article electronically or in print, please email the author at: innerhealing@email.com