

## Breath exercise

I put this exercise together to help you get the impact and healing that can be had just from practicing breathing techniques. We don't often focus on breathing, as we do it unconsciously and yet without it we would die. As a result we are shallow breathers and missing out on some great and practical exercises that can bring about well being on all levels of our being.

We are going to focus on a simple technique to build our Chi, Chi is life force energy and we get it from breath and also the energies we take in from the Earth, such as food. When we have stagnant Chi, we have illness, apathy, depression etc. When we have good Chi that is moving and flowing in our physical and subtle bodies we are then flowing and have much more energy this helps us to accomplish so much more. Chi is vital to Life and Spiritual practice.

Make sure that you are ready by creating a quiet and undisturbed place to practice. Just start by sitting up straight and paying attention to your breath, breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth, what does is sound like? Where is the breath going in your body, how is your body responding to your breath? Can you feel your ribs expanding, your lungs? Can you feel the space that the breath is creating in your body? How deeply do you breathe? Just listening to the breath can help you shut off external distractions, so go ahead and give yourself a few minutes here? A good amount of time would be 5-10 minutes focusing all of your attention on your breath.

You might now be feeling the urge to breath deeper, so go ahead and try that, breath into the lower abdomen, filling up the area where the ribs are, expanding into the chest area, imagine or feel you lungs expanding, breathe into them until you can fill them no more. Then release fully through your mouth every last drop of air, you may even want to bend down as you do this squeezing out all of the stagnant, stale air that has been sitting in your lungs. Do this 5 more times. How does this feel, how is your body responding? Did you find your rhythm with your breath? Pay attention to any changes or sensations that you may be feeling and breathe into them. What is your body trying to tell you? What about your emotions?

Now I would like you to do this same practice, count your in breath for your personal count. You will find as you practice this that your ability to breathe in will deepen and therefore get longer. So breathe in for your personal rhythmic count, then hold for the same and then breathe out for the same. Practice this for the next 10 minutes. Enjoy the peace you will receive from this practice and do it regularly to see the results. You will actually find yourself doing this outside of this meditation as your body will give you the cues to practice some deep breathing.