



The Blood Pressure Balance Programme

Week 6 Handout

Tips for Maintaining a Healthy Breathing Practice

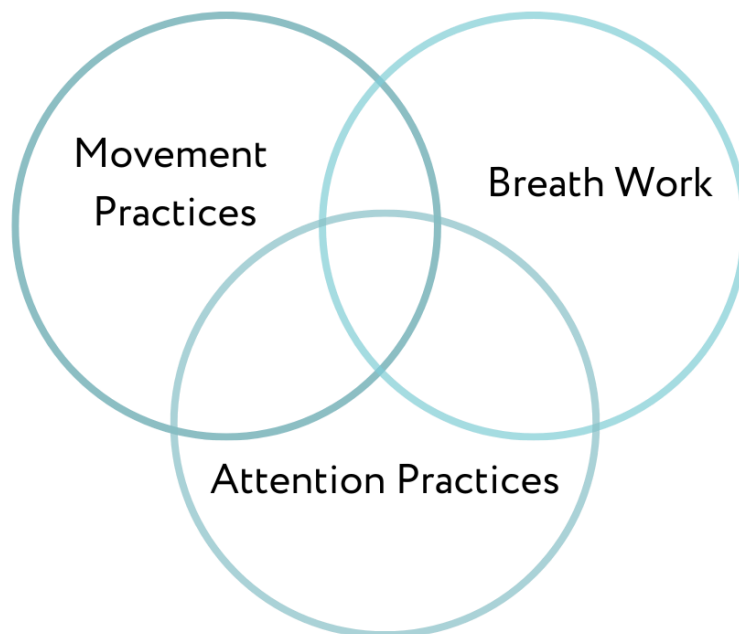
Breathing exercises don't have to take a lot of time out of your day. It's just about setting aside time to pay attention to your breathing. Here are a few ideas to get started:

- Begin with just 5 minutes a day and increase your time as the exercise becomes easier and more comfortable.
- If 5 minutes feels too long, start with just 2 minutes.
- Practice multiple times a day. Schedule set times or practice conscious breathing as you feel the need.
- Pay attention to the quality of your breath rather than just the quantity. Practice slow, deep, and controlled breathing, focusing on fully inhaling and exhaling with each breath. Quality breathing involves breathing from the diaphragm rather than shallow chest breathing.
- Take short breathing breaks throughout the day, such as during transitions between tasks, while waiting in line, or before meals. Use reminders or cues to prompt you to pause and take a few deep breaths.

- Combine breathing exercises with gentle movement or stretching to enhance relaxation and stress relief.
- Pay attention to how your body responds to different breathing techniques. If a particular exercise feels uncomfortable or causes tension, adjust your approach or try a different technique. Honor your body's needs and limitations, and choose practices that feel nourishing and supportive.

Breathing Routine for Wellbeing

Over the course of this programme, we have practiced a range of different skills and tools you can utilise to help calm the sympathetic nervous system in times of stress, to improve overall health and well-being. There is no 'best' practice, all will support your blood pressure and heart health. The most important thing is to find one or more practices that suit you, and that you can slot into your daily routine.



Finding a Yoga Class

These are just a few examples of the many types of yoga practices available. Local offerings will vary, so it's worth an internet search to see what is available.

Each style offers unique benefits and approaches to physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, allowing individuals to find a practice that resonates with their needs, preferences, and goals.

For online classes (free on YouTube) we recommend:

Yoga with Adriene: <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithadriene>

Yin yoga with Cassandra: <https://www.youtube.com/user/yogawithkassandra>



HATHA

Slow paced, gentle style
Focuses on controlled breathing
Poses held for short period

GOOD FOR...

Beginners



BIKRAM

Hot yoga
90 minutes practice
26 poses in hot, humid environment

GOOD FOR...

Flexibility
Strength



VINYASA

Focuses on breathing techniques while moving through poses

GOOD FOR...

Weight loss



KUNDALINI & ANUSARA

Spiritual yoga
Uses chanting mantras and breathing with energising movements

GOOD FOR...

A spiritual experience
Those who are not shy



IYENGAR

Uses blocks and straps to help align and support joints and muscles

GOOD FOR...

Relieving body pain
Stretching out muscles



ASHTANGA

Faster paced yoga
Physically demanding

GOOD FOR...

More experienced yogis
Those with good strength and endurance levels

Keeping in Touch

We regularly offer Mindfulness for Later Life courses, which are usually free for residents of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire. You are welcome to sign up!

We post updates on our Facebook page

(<https://www.facebook.com/TheMindfulLifeGroupCIC/>), and there is an option to subscribe to our newsletter at the end of your questionnaire measures.



The Clear Days (Excerpt)

The dogs of indecision
Cross and cross the field of vision.
A cloud, a buzzing fly
Distract the lover's eye.
Until the heart has found
Its native piece of ground
The day withholds its light,
The eye must stray unlit.
The ground's the body's bride,
Who will not be denied.
Not until all is given
Comes the thought of heaven.
When the mind's an empty room
The clear days come.

By: Wendell Berry