

DAY 2 – BREATHE

Transcript

Hi everyone! It's Day 2 of *The 12 Days of Yoga*.

How are you feeling? A little tired?

All the rushing around up to and during the holiday period can leave us a little distracted and stressed. But there is simple technique we can use to help centre and relax us at anytime and anywhere, and that's breathe!

Not the shallow "chest breaths", which can increase anxiety and tension, but deep abdominal breathing or diaphragmatic breathing. This deep breathing encourages full use of the lungs, invokes the relaxation response and bringing with it calmness and focus!

(0:55) DEEP ABDOMINAL BREATHING

So, come into a seated position on a chair or on the floor, or lay down on your back.

Use blankets or cushions to ensure that your position is comfortable.

Close the eyes or, if you prefer, lower the gaze.

Turn the attention to the natural breath.

There's no need to change it, let it flow.

...

Place your hands on your abdomen, just below the navel.

Can you feel the abdomen moving as you breathe?

...

On your next inhalation, take a deeper breath in. Imagine that you're drawing the breath right down to the lowest lobes of the lungs. Feel the lungs expanding. And as they do, the diaphragm, that sheet of muscle below the lungs contracts, pushes against the abdominal organs and the abdomen expands.

It might be a really subtle movement, so don't force it or strain.

As you breathe out, let the abdomen soften and relax.

Continue like this. Breathe in and draw the breath down into the body, feel the body expanding.

Breathe out, let everything soften and release.

...

Count five more deep breaths:

- Inhale – the body expands.
- Exhale – soften and let go.

...

When you've finished your rounds, return to your natural breath.

Bring your hands back into the lap or by your side.

Note if there are any changes in your natural breathing, any changes to your physical body or the way you feel.

...

When you're ready, become aware of your surroundings, start to bring movement to your body, and then slowly open the eyes.

Aum shanti!