



Wellness flash

SMART STEPS RUTHERFORD COUNTY EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM

FEBRUARY 2014

6 Breathing Exercises to Relax in 10 Minutes or Less

Over-worked, under-slept, and feeling the pressure like whoa? There are plenty of ways to find calm — without investing in a four-hand spa massage. Turns out, all we need is a pair of healthy(ish) lungs, our breath, and 10 minutes or less. Here are **six expert-approved ways to relax using breathing techniques** borrowed from yoga, meditation, and even the therapist's chair.



Illustration by Tanya Burr

BREATHING BASICS — THE NEED-TO-KNOW

Don't wait 'til fight or flight kicks in before minding the breath. Controlled breathing not only keeps the mind and body functioning at their best, it can also lower blood pressure, promote feelings of calm and relaxation, and if we play our lungs right — help us de-stress. While the effects of breathing techniques on anxiety haven't yet been studied at length, many experts encourage using the breath as a means of increasing awareness, mindfulness, or for the yogis among us, finding that elusive state of Zen. Let's get to the bottom of the breath work with breathing expert Dr. Alison McConnell, yoga instructor Rebecca Pacheco, and psychologist Dr. Ellen Langer. But follow closely: Breathing easy isn't quite as easy as it sounds!

MIND OVER MATTER—YOUR ACTION PLAN

From the confines of a bed, a desk, or anywhere negativity finds its way, consider these six techniques to help keep calm and carry on.

SAMA VRITTI OR “EQUAL BREATHING”

How it's done: Balance can do a body good, beginning with the breath. To start, inhale for a count of four, then exhale for a count of four (all through the nose, which adds a natural resistance to the breath). Got the basic pranayama down? More advanced yogis can aim for six to eight counts per breath with the same goal in mind: Calm the nervous system, increase focus, and reduce stress, Pacheco says.

When it works best: Anytime, anyplace — but this is one technique that's especially effective before bed. “Similar to counting sheep,” Pacheco says, “if you're having trouble falling asleep, this breath can help take your mind off the racing thoughts, or whatever might be distracting you from sleep.” Level of difficulty: Beginner

ABDOMINAL BREATHING TECHNIQUE

How it's done: With one hand on the chest and the other on the belly, take a deep breath in through the nose, ensuring the diaphragm (not the chest) inflates with enough air to create a stretch in the lungs. The goal: Six to 10 deep, slow breaths per minute for 10 minutes each day to experience immediate reductions to heart rate and blood pressure, McConnell says. Keep at it for six to eight weeks, and those benefits might stick around even longer.

When it works best: Before an exam, or any stressful event. But keep in mind, “Those who operate in a stressed state all the time might be a little shocked how hard it is to control the breath,” Pacheco says. To help train the breath, consider biofeedback tools such as McConnell's Breathe Strong app, which can help users pace their breathing wherever they are. Level of difficulty: Beginner

NADI SHODHANA OR “ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING”

How it's done: A yogi's best friend, this breath is said to bring calm and balance, and unite the right and left sides of the brain. Starting in a comfortable meditative pose, hold the right thumb over the right nostril and inhale deeply through the left nostril. At the peak of inhalation, close off the left nostril with the ring finger, then exhale through the right nostril. Continue the pattern, inhaling through the right nostril, closing it off with the right thumb, and exhaling through the left nostril. When it works best: Crunch time, or whenever it's time to focus or energize. Just don't try this one before bed: Nadi shodhana is said to “clear the channels” and make people feel more awake. “It's almost like a cup of coffee,” Pacheco says. Level of difficulty: Intermediate

KAPALABHATI OR “SKULL SHINING BREATH”

How it's done: Ready to brighten up your day from the inside out? This one begins with a long, slow inhale, followed by a quick, powerful exhale generated from the lower belly. Once comfortable with the contraction, up the pace to one inhale-exhale (all through the nose) every one to two seconds, for a total of 10 breaths. When it works best: When it's time to wake up, warm or, or to start looking on the brighter side of things. “It's pretty abdominal-intensive,” Pacheco says, “but it will warm up the body, shake off stale energy, and wake up the brain.” If alternate nostril breathing is like coffee, consider this a shot of espresso, she says. Level of difficulty: Advanced

PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION

How it's done: To nix tension from head to toe, close the eyes and focus on tensing and relaxing each muscle group for two to three seconds each. Start with the feet and toes, then move up to the knees, thighs, rear, chest, arms, hands, neck, jaw, and eyes — all while maintaining deep, slow breaths. Having trouble staying on track? Anxiety and panic specialist Dr. Patricia Farrell suggests we breathe in through the nose, hold for a count of five while the muscles tense, then breathe out through the mouth on release. When it works best: At home, at a desk, or even on the road. One word of caution: Dizziness is never the goal. If holding the breath ever feels uncomfortable, tone it down to just a few seconds at most. Level of difficulty: Beginner

GUIDED VISUALIZATION

How it's done: Head straight for that “happy place,” no questions asked. With a coach, therapist, or helpful recording as your guide, breathe deeply while focusing on pleasant, positive images to replace any negative thoughts. Psychologist Dr. Ellen Langer explains that while it's just one means of achieving mindfulness, “Guided visualization helps puts you in the place you want to be, rather than letting your mind go to the internal dialogue that is stressful.”

When it works best: Pretty much any place you can safely close your eyes and let go (e.g. *not* at the wheel of a car). Level of difficulty: Intermediate

While stress, frustration, and other daily setbacks will always be there, the good news is, so will our breath.

Rutherford County UT/TSU Extension Presents "Lawn Care 101"

WELLNESS HAPPENINGS

What: A day of learning for anyone who manages or intends to manage their lawn. You'll learn about the different turf grasses, what they need to grow, common problems and pests, and how to manage for lawn appearance and health. Conventional and organic lawn care practices will be discussed.

See: Demonstrations of lawn care equipment (*weather permitting!*)

When: Saturday, March 8, 2014 from 8:30 a.m. - no later than 5:30 p.m.

Where: Lane Agri-Park Community Center building located at 315 John R. Rice Blvd in Murfreesboro. The Community Center (home of the Farmer's Market) is located at the very back of the Lane Agri-Park campus.

Cost: \$15 per person includes snacks, lunch, and program materials

Registration: Pre-registration with fee payment is required by **Monday, March 3, 2014.** You can register in person at the Extension office between 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Mon-Fri or mail your registration to:

Rutherford County Extension Office
Attn: Lawn Care 101
315 John R. Rice Blvd, Suite 101
Murfreesboro, TN 37129

Make checks payable to Rutherford County Extension Service (RCES)

Call or email Mitchell Mote (mmote1@utk.edu) if you have questions.

Slip Slop Slap Seek Slide



Protect yourself in five ways from skin cancer

Cancer Prevention

There are two ways to help defeat cancer. The first is to get your routine medical screenings so that cancer can be detected early enough to be treated or cured. The second is to make changes in your daily lifestyle that can help protect you from developing cancer.

Best Practices

First, discovering cancer in its early stages is important. To do this, schedule regular check-ups with your health care provider. At your appointment, your health care provider may ask you to get certain screenings based on your age, gender, and family history. Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center recommends routine screenings as the best way to identify risk. You can also see recommended preventive screenings specific for your age and gender on your Health Advisor in the Health & Wellness Information Portal.

Second, there are lifestyle choices you can make to reduce your risk of developing certain types of cancer and strengthen your health. What are these choices?

- Do not use tobacco products. Using tobacco products increases your risk for all types of cancer.
- Protect yourself from the UV rays of the sun. Stay in the shade, wear a hat, protective clothing, sunglasses, and sunscreen.
- Eliminate or limit your consumption of alcohol. A woman should drink no more than one drink a day. A man should drink no more than two drinks a day. A drink equals 12 oz. of beer, 5 oz. of wine, or 1.5 oz of liquor.
- Get moving. Get 30 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physically activity 5 or more days of the week.
- Eat healthy. Focus on plant foods. Choose foods high in fiber including a variety of fruits and vegetables. Also, choose whole grains in bread, cereal, rice, and pasta.
- Limit the amount of red meat you eat. Avoid processed meat.
- Reach or maintain a healthy body weight.

How we can help:

Med Point Clinic is here to support you with treatment and counseling services if you desire to become tobacco free. Contact us at 904-6770 to make an appointment.

American Cancer Society: U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

VISIT RUTHERFORD COUNTY'S SMART STEPS WELLNESS PROGRAM ONLINE AT: www.rutherfordcountyttn.gov/rm/wellness.htm

February 2014

2/1/14 Gym Feature "Work Out Anytime"
2/7/14 Wear Red Day
2/8/14 Healthy Veggie Gardens
2/17/14 Biometrics Screening deadline

March 2014

3/8/14 Lawn Care 101

'Healthy Vegetable Gardens'

Presented by UT/TSU Ext. of RC

Join our FREE four session course for beginning veggie gardeners. Emphasis will be placed on the basic necessities for growing a garden that has a real chance at producing vegetables and surviving the normal stresses of our environment. Classes: Feb 8, Mar 29, Apr 19, Jun 14. from 9-11:00a.m.

Community Center
315 John Rice Blvd.
Murfreesboro.

Call 898-7710 to sign up or email Mitchell Mote with any questions at mmote1@utk.edu





WORKOUT ANYTIME
Your Fitness. Your Schedule!

Our mission is simple, to provide the most convenient (24/7-365) first class fitness experience, with the best equipment, superior service and cleanliness in a neighborhood atmosphere where everyone knows your name. Our motto is to "think big, keep it simple and do it with integrity". Founded on these principles, we are committed to the fight against obesity and creating a better quality of life for all!

The Fitness Advantage

WORKOUT ANYTIME is serious about fitness equipment.

Our major equipment comes from Matrix Fitness — the world's premier commercial fitness manufacturer. In the last two years alone, Matrix has received more awards for innovation than any other brand. Matrix Fitness equipment is characterized by superior industrial design, innovative ergonomics and high-end tubular construction.

It's all about ergonomics – Great ergonomic design ensures that each muscle group is properly isolated so that even a novice can exercise properly and safely. Examples include The Perfect Squat (for hips and butt); The Ab Coaster (stomach machine for better abs and stronger core) and the only self-spotting bench that keeps you safe while weight lifting.

Why we offer the best equipment – You wouldn't expect a value-priced club to offer the Rolls Royce of equipment. We don't have to buy \$9,000 treadmills, but with our 40 years experience, we know that it takes a solid platform to safely accommodate walkers and runners up to 500 lbs. Plus, higher-end equipment has less down time, delivers more value and provides higher member satisfaction and comfort.

A better workout space – Our polypropylene, anti-microbial flooring is extremely durable, easy to clean and maintain, but has the comfort and beauty of carpet. We want to provide the highest quality fitness experience for our members and franchisees. WORKOUT ANYTIME stands far above all other 24/7 gyms. We are the best equipped health club, per square foot in America, and soon to be the planet!

Club features:

- 24/7 Access 365 days a year
- Month to month memberships
- Certified Personal Trainers
- Locker Rooms
- Tanning
- Hydro Massage Therapy
- 5600 sq. feet Cardio, Strength training, &
- Free weights

Memberships:

\$15 Basic Membership

Fitness at ALL Workout Anytime Facilities
Free IFA *Fitness Evaluation* by our Fitness Director to make sure you're on target with your goals (this location only)
Access to Tanning and Hydro Massage \$5 each use

\$25 Premium Membership

All the above PLUS...
Unlimited Hydro Massage and Tanning (Smyrna, Lenox Village, and Mt Juliet only)
Premium Guest Pass (this location only)
Monthly IFA *Fitness Evaluation* (this location only)



Email Kelli for your chance to win One FREE month!
kperrien@rutherfordcountyttn.gov

We want to help you get started in the right direction.
We're a hands on gym/family who works Together.
Free Orientation is available for all of our equipment.

