

NATUROPATHIC PERSPECTIVES

Redefining Your Health



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Deep breathing

Breathing is so simple and so obvious we often take it for granted; ignoring the power it has to affect body, mind and spirit. With each inhale we bring oxygen into the body and spark the transformation of nutrients into fuel. Each exhale purges the body of carbon dioxide, a toxic waste. Breathing also affects our state of mind. It can make us excited or calm, tense or relaxed. It can make our thinking confused or clear.

Diaphragmatic breathing

Diaphragmatic breathing is the healthiest form of breathing. It is also the most natural - observe how a very young baby breathes. They will use their diaphragm and full torso for each breath. By utilizing your diaphragm you activate your natural means of emptying and re-filling your lungs effectively.

To check how you breathe

- Rest one hand on your upper chest and the other on your navel area
- Inhale – notice which hand rises first
- If the upper hand rises first you are using upper chest breathing. If the lower hand rises first, you are breathing with your diaphragm.

Upper-Chest Breathing

This is not improper technique, but it does mean that your breathing

will be a lot more rapid than if you were using your diaphragm. This is because the amount you can inhale and exhale is considerably less - because the upper ribcage does not have the ability to expand and contract as well as the combination of lower ribcage and diaphragm 'floor' - diaphragmatic breathing.

Using your Diaphragm

Diaphragmatic breathing, particularly if combined with mid- and upper-chest breathing, is much slower and more calming than upper-chest breathing alone. An added bonus to diaphragm breathing is that it gives a wonderful massage to your internal organs such as the heart, liver, and digestive organs (including colon) keeping them toned and ensuring they get a healthy blood supply.

Most better-breathing techniques rely on your ability to breathe using your diaphragm. So if you have habitually used the mid- or upper-chest it is worthwhile to first develop your ability to use your diaphragm. That way, if you need to use a special technique you will have the diaphragm-breathing skill ready.

Practice using your diaphragm

Spend a few minutes a couple of times a day practicing using your diaphragm:

1. Lie flat on the floor. Raise your knees. (You can put a cushion under them if you wish.)
2. Put one palm on your upper chest and the other over your navel. (Your objective is to have the lower hand rise first when you breathe in.)

3. Breathe out fully - and then a little bit more. With practice you will find you can do this by drawing

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in your abdomen. Pause for 2-4 seconds.

4. Allow the air to naturally flow in again.

Slowly and calmly repeat this cycle a few times.



Known as "Canada's stress guru", **Eli Bay** is one of the leading authority figures on stress control. He has been training in the field for over 30 years and his unique program has gained world-wide respect.

Contact Eli Bay at the Relaxation Response Institute:

1-877-435-4229

<http://www.elibay.com/index.php>

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

Adrenal Energizer Smoothie

With the warmer temperatures fast approaching, a healthy smoothie made with your favourite wheatgrass is a great way to add nutrients and boost energy throughout the day.

- 1 cup of fresh or frozen mixed fruit – think bananas, strawberries, blueberries, peaches, pineapple, cherries, pears, etc.
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseed
- 1 tbsp flaxseed oil
- ¼ cup plain yoghurt
- 1 – 2 scoops of your favourite Greens powder (as directed)
- 1 – 2 cups water/cow's milk/soy/rice/almond milk

Blend all ingredients together until smooth. Enjoy!

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of use in Chinese medicine for its Spleen invigorating and Kidney tonifying properties. It is used for enhancing and improving mental and physical performance.

Studies on Eleuthrococcus have shown that the effects of stress are reduced in patients suffering from chronic illness, environmental or occupational stress. It has been shown to enhance immune function. Eleuthrococcus is used in various forms. A decoction made from dried root. Liquid extract or capsule form as a powdered root, standardized to contain 0.7mg eleuthroside E.

Registered Massage Therapists

Sylvie Hebert, RMT and Corey Henderson, RMT.

Sylvie has studied craniosacral therapy, somatoemotional release, and visceral manipulation. She is also a qualified Reiki practitioner and currently studying Osteopathy.

Corey has experience working with lymph edema, sports injuries, sprains and strains, pregnancy, MVAs, MS, cancer, repetitive strain injuries, carpal tunnel syndrome and more.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a mind/body stress reduction technique that involves tensing and relaxing the various muscle groups of the body in a systematic manner. Dr. Edmund Jacobson developed this technique more than fifty years ago when he discovered that a muscle could be relaxed by first tensing it for a few seconds, then releasing it.

- 1) First you need to get in a comfortable lying position on your back
- 2) Place your hands on your abdomen so you will be able to feel your breathing
- 3) Now begin by taking a deep, long, slow cleansing breath for a count of 3, feel your hands rise as your abdomen expands with the breath, hold for a count of 2
- 4) Slowly breathe out for a count of 3 feeling your hands sink as your abdomen falls. Breathing out all of your worries and tension, nothing is left but relaxation and calm.
- 5) Allow yourself to breath like this for several breaths so that you can establish a pattern and clear your mind with each breath
- 6) Next, beginning at your feet, on the inhalation, tense up the muscles in your feet, really becoming aware of the tension that you hold in your feet and then on the exhalation release the tension and let your feet relax and become heavy on your bed
- 7) Now move to the calves, on the inhalation, tense up the muscles in your calves, really becoming aware of the tension that you hold in your

calves and then on the exhalation release the tension and let your calves relax and become heavy on your bed

- 8) Move slowly through your body parts focusing on the shins, thighs, buttocks, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, neck and lastly the face and head. Breathing through the tension and relaxing your body more fully with each breath.
- 9) Your body should feel extremely relaxed when you are finished, you should feel heavy on your bed as though you are sinking in further and further.
- 10) Doing this before sleep or each time you wake up in the night, especially if you are unable to fall right back to sleep, will help you **to relax and focus on yourself** instead of what is going on around you. It is like counting sheep.

Wheatgrass

Wheatgrass refers to the young grass of the common wheat plant, *Triticum aestivum*, and is used as an herbal medicine for its therapeutic and nutritional properties. It is available as freshly squeezed juice, an extract, whole leaf powder, or tablets. There are several health benefits to wheatgrass, but its three most therapeutic roles are: blood purification, liver detoxification, and colon cleansing.

Eleuthrococcus senticosus

Eleuthrococcus, also known as Siberian ginseng has a long history

Naturopathic Perspectives

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