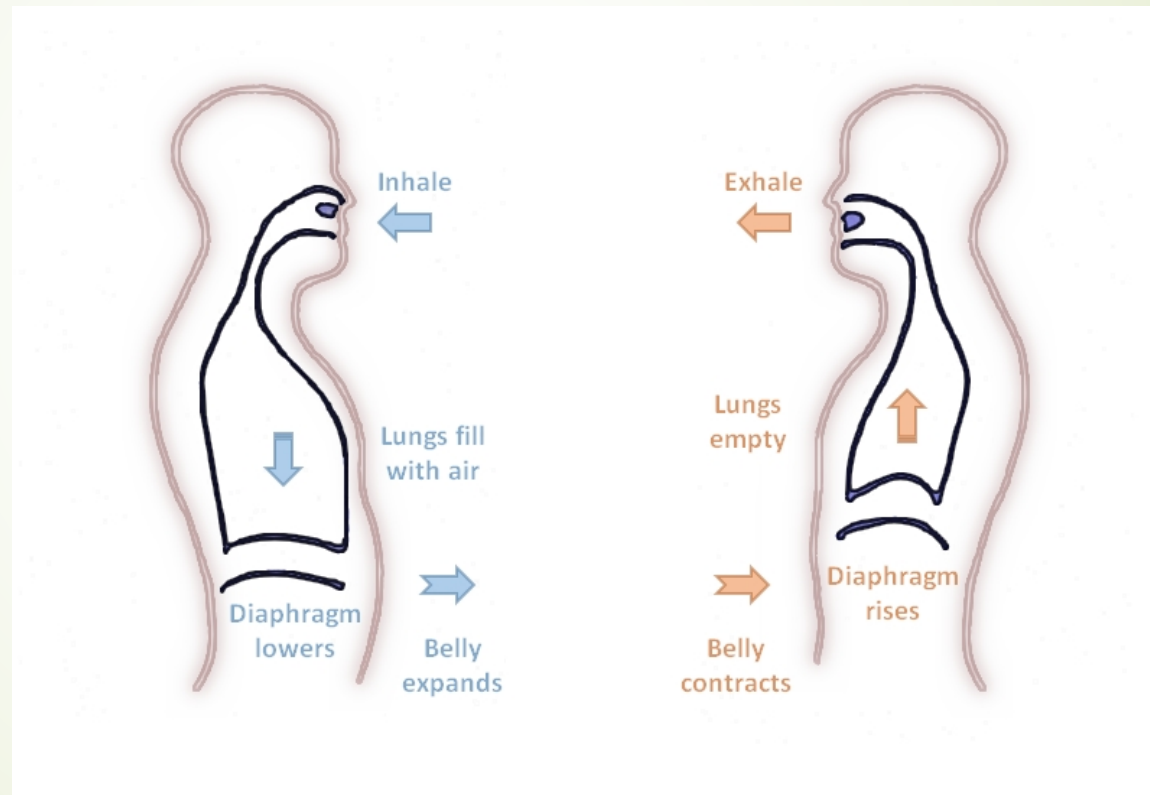




Breathing and Gymnastics: Why is breathing correctly important?

1. Helps us to relax
2. Lowers our heart rate
3. Lowers our blood pressure
4. Improves our core muscle stability.
The diaphragm helps stabilize our spine, so our core is stronger.
This helps us perform better and makes us less likely to become injured.
5. Slows the rate of breathing which means we spend less energy
6. Helps us think more clearly
7. Puts us in a better mood

What happens to our Diaphragm when we Breathe?



Nervous System and Breathing



SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

Stress Response

Revs you up, preparing you to fight, take flight or freeze

- Heart beats fast
- Breath is fast and shallow
- Pupils of eyes expand (can make you sensitive to light)
- Gut becomes inactive (difficult to digest)
- Blood rushes to your skeletal muscles and away from your brain, making it hard to think clearly
- Hormones rush through your body, making you feel anxious
- Expend your energy



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

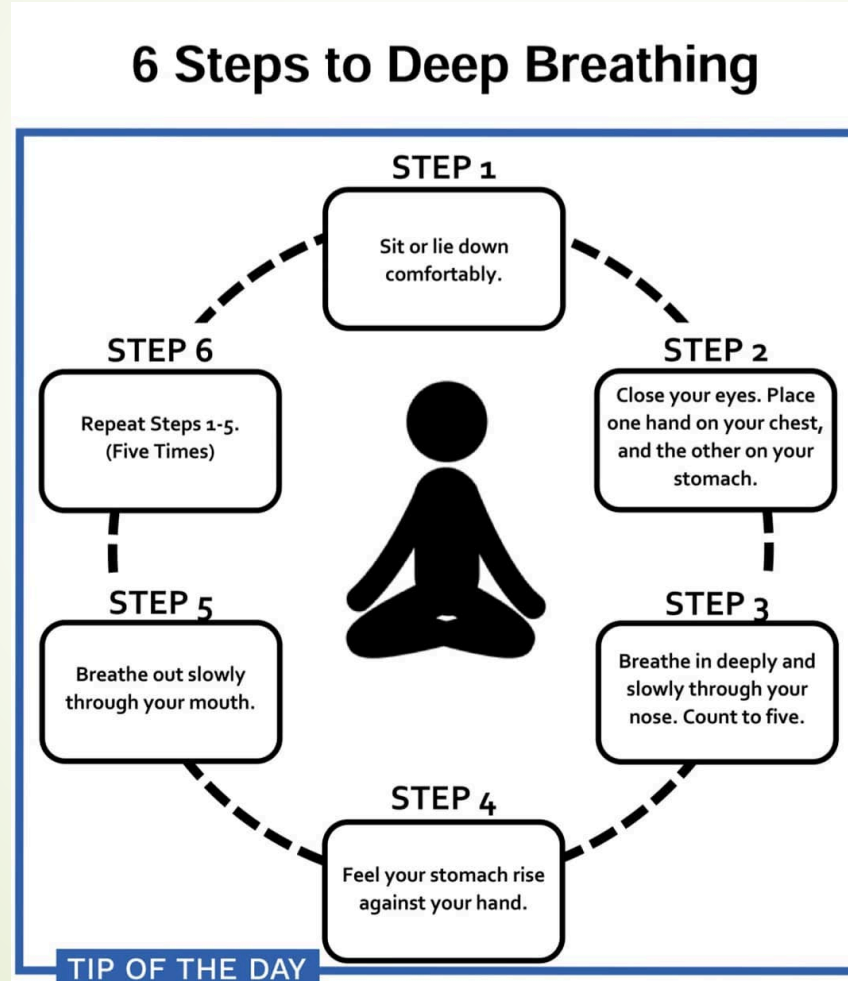
Relaxation Response


Calms you down, preparing you to rest, think and restore

- Heart beats in slow, rhythmic pattern
- Breath is full and slow
- Pupils of eyes shrink
- Gut is active (helps you digest and absorb the nutrients from your food)
- Increased blood flow to gut, lungs and brain
- Hormones rush in, lifting your mood and helping you to relax
- Conserves your energy



Belly Breathing: We do this to trigger a sense of safety to our body.






Nostril Breathing: We do this to increase the amount of oxygen we take in, help us focus, and lesson the fight/flight response.

Starting Position: Rest your thumb on the right nostril and your ring finger on the left nostril.

1. Take a deep/slow breath in and out of the nose.
2. Close right nostril with right thumb. Inhale through the left nostril slowly and steadily.
3. Close the left nostril with the pinky/ring finger so both nostrils are held closed; retain your breath at the top of the inhale for a brief pause.
4. Open your right nostril and release the breath slowly through the right side; pause briefly at the bottom of the exhale.
5. Inhale through the right side slowly.
6. Hold both nostrils closed (with ring finger and thumb).
7. Open left nostril and release breath slowly through the left side. Pause briefly at the bottom.

Repeat 5-10 cycles, allowing the mind to follow your inhales and exhales.



Bee Breathing: We do this to send “calming” signals to our mind and body.

Humming quickly triggers a relaxation response to our nerves

Practice with eyes open or closed; seated, standing, or lying down.

1. Bring awareness into the present moment, guiding your focus to the body and the breath.
2. Take a long, slow breath in through the nose.
3. Close your lips and breath out the nose through the back of the throat while making the sound “Hummmm.”
4. Exhale until you can no longer hum.

Repeat for 5 or more rounds.