

Blissful Breath

30-minute playsheet

Welcome to the **Blissful Breath 30-min sequence**; a practice in *presence*. Presence really is our most potent healer, and the easiest way to be present in your *Yoga for the Vagina* practice is to focus on the breath. Breathing naturally - as we were designed - isn't just a cool thing to learn so you can meditate better or go deeper into that super curvy yoga pose! Breathing well supports our overall health, improving the functioning and efficiency of our heart, lungs, and other internal organs. Even our pelvic floor and stability of our reproductive organs are greatly affected by the way we breathe.

If you're stressed or experience anxiety - if you run around in a busy bother and get overwhelmed easily - you can bet your sexy booty that you're not breathing naturally. And if you've signed up to this course to become more spiritual or to heal some physical nasty, or even to expand your pleasure, then breathing is a vital part of your growth, because it is the breath that will guide you home to yourself. As you practice these sequences I encourage you to really explore yourself *through* the breath. Let the breath be the gateway into yourself.

The great spiritual pathfinder G. I. Gurdjieff once said that 'without mastering breathing nothing can be mastered'. That is why we start with the **Blissful Breath 30min sequence**, because without this core understanding and skill, then much of what you learn in the following sequences will be difficult to fully integrate and embody. So take a moment now to breathe. Yes, that's right, just breathe. Breathe all the way down to your belly, and simply notice how that feels for you...

Ok, now you're in your body, being *present*, we're ready to go deep!

BREATHE... JUST BREATHE....

Breathing. It's such a simple act - we all do it - yet, only a handful of us do it *well*. Well enough to maintain optimum health. For most, breathing shallow breaths into the chest is the norm. This is very superficial breathing, especially given we have a whole torso yearning to be filled with delicious oxygen. Wanting to be woken up. Wanting to be *nourished*. Wanting to experience incredible health.

Superficial breathing equals a superficial experience of ourselves.

Imagine a half filled hot air-balloon. It wouldn't get very high, would it? Neither can we get naturally high on life if we're not filling ourselves up. If you're able to breathe naturally for even a small snippet of the more than 15,000 breathes you'll take each day, that will be a HUGE step towards preventing many of the physical and psychological problems that plague modern times. Not to mention the awareness this would bring to our connection with our body.

Our life-force energy comes from three main sources: The food we eat, the subconscious conditioning we took on from our parents, (to learn more about this, watch *The Art of Self-Love* video playshop in the **Resources** area) and from the air we breathe. Through working with the breath, and learning how to breathe open all areas of our body, we're able to dissolve the blocks within the body so we can experience more aliveness and more freeness in our every day lives.

Put simply, when we don't breathe properly, we don't get good mileage from our body. Our body is our vehicle for life and just like a car, if we don't fill it up with good quality fuel, it runs pretty lousy. Same goes if we don't keep topping up our life-force energy reserves *through* our breath. They run dry. And when they run dry, our body starts to break down and fall apart.

Most of us only use a very small percentage of our lung capacity. The total air capacity of our lungs is about 5,000 millilitres, yet the average breath is only 500 millilitres. If we only filled a tenth of the fuel our car could take, it wouldn't get us very far, and the same goes with our breath. Hence why so many people are having such a mediocre experience of life. To breathe well, is to *live* well.

GET YOUR OXYGEN HIT!

Aside from the fact that we need oxygen to stay alive, illness and disease cannot survive in a fully oxygenated body. Pretty groovy hey? Just as love dissolves fear, so does oxygen dissolve disease. You may have even heard of Oxygen Therapy in hospitals, which is a treatment that helps provide the body with extra oxygen so the body can work as it was designed; oxygen in our blood powers our metabolism (making it great for weight loss), circulation and our ability to heal.

Many people remain sick because they're, quite literally, starving themselves of the one nutrient they need to heal; oxygen! And the best bit is, oxygen is FREE!!! When we're not taking in adequate supplies of oxygen, we are more prone to illness, morbid emotions (Yes, I'm talking about those cranky outbursts you may blame on PMS) and weakened physical and mental abilities, with our internal organs the biggest casualty.

It's like a domino effect. Blood flow to our internal organs diminish and the smooth flow of energy throughout our body gets interrupted. Stagnant energy in the body - or energy blocks as you may know them - create disease. If you've ever had acupuncture or Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), you'll be familiar with this concept. Our ligaments start to shorten, restricting the movement of our organs, wearing out our bodily functions and before you know it you're hit with some horrible disease.

A faulty breathing pattern deregulates body chemistry affecting organ health.

Yet this is preventable. The more we can flush our body with oxygen, through healthy breathing, the healthier we'll be overall, both physically and mentally, and the quicker our body will heal from any existing ailments. That is why your aim in the **Blissful Breath sequences** is to centre your focus on your breathing and, over time, allow yourself to return to your natural way of breathing - the way that fully nourishes you. Focusing on your breath for a dedicated time each day, will help you bring healthy breathing patterns into your daily life.

Interestingly, one of the big reasons people don't take in enough oxygen, is because they're cutting their exhalations short - as in, they're not exhaling deeply or long enough - meaning that about a quarter of their lung-space remains full of a carbon dioxide. *Why is this a problem?* Because it means there's only three quarters of the lungs free to take in vital oxygen on the *next* inhalation. So even if you're pulling big doses of oxygen into your system, you're still short-changing yourself.

Ok, so we're not taking in as much oxygen as we're capable of, why's that such a big deal? Because diminishing our oxygen intake causes toxic waste products to build up in our blood. If you find yourself yawning, chances are, this is why! By not emptying out the carbon dioxide you'll also increase stress in your body, and lower your mental capacities and clarity. So if you have the urge to have a cuppa or a chocolate bar mid-afternoon, chances are your body is really craving an oxygen hit, not a caffeine hit.

To breath is to live. To breathe fully is to live fully.

It really is quite absurd how many times we reach for all sort of substances to help us feel better, when oxygen is all that's required to satisfy our needs. Not only does breathing well help detoxify and release toxins, it releases tension (which we'll explore in more depth in the **Letting Go sequence**), it relaxes the mind and body, irons out negative emotions, relieves pain, massages our internal organs, increases muscle, strengthens our immune system, improves posture, the quality of our blood, digestion and our nervous system, while strengthening our lungs and heart, boosting our energy levels and improving our cellular regeneration. What is there not to LOVE about oxygen?

OK, BREATHING WELL IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. HOW DO WE DO IT?

When I talk about breathing 'naturally' I'm talking about the type of spontaneous, whole-body breathing we did as a newborn baby, before we learnt how to restrict and contract our breathing. To put it in super easy to understand terms, we breathe deep into our belly, letting our belly expand on the inhalation until it can't expand any further. Then exhale as long and slow as possible. You really want to draw out the exhalation, focusing on making each breath deeper and slower.

Try it now. Place one hand on your belly and one hand on your heart and breathe. Can you feel any movement in your belly as you breathe? Can you feel your diaphragm moving. Can you feel your diaphragm putting pressure on any of your other organs as you inhale? Continue breathing right down into your belly, feeling it expand and deflate, simply noticing what you notice.

Let your body breathe.

The secret really is, to slow your breathing right down. Medical textbooks suggest that the normal respiratory rate for adults is only 12 breaths per minute while resting. Older textbooks suggest as low as 8-10 breaths per minute. Most people breathe much faster than this, the average being around 15-20 breaths per minute. Respiratory rates in the sick are usually higher. The higher you go over 12 breaths per minute, the less oxygen your tissues will have and the closer you come to cancer.

Mouth or nose breathing? It's ALWAYS suggested you breathe in through your nose as this filters and warms the air (apart from specific breathing techniques sometimes used in yoga). In general in the sequences I encourage you to also breathe out through your nose, however there will be times when I ask you to breath out through your mouth, sometimes with sound, or even a sigh. Each different way of exhaling offers different benefits, hence the variety here.

Give it a go...

*Lie down in **Base Position**. Place two or three fingers on your lower abdomen. Inhale slowly and fully, feeling your belly rise. Then as you exhale, gently press your fingers into your abdomen – between your pubic bone and navel. During your inhalation gently release the pressure and simply notice the movement there. Sense how you abdomen responds to the pressure. Take a few breathes here, noticing.*

Move your fingers to your navel. Gently press down on the exhalation and release the pressure on the inhalation. Notice how your lower breathing space starts to open and expand. Do the same on your lower ribs, on both sides of your trunk. Your lower ribs are also called floating ribs as they're not attached to your sternum. The expansion of your ribs helps create more space so your lungs can expand further.

Do the same exercise pressing gently on your sternum as you exhale and relaxing the pressure as you inhale. Feel the expansion that comes from that movement.

When we breath naturally, right down into our abdomen - also known as abdominal breathing - we are expanding layers of muscle and fascia on the inside of the abdominal wall, which are often tight and contracted in women. In this way the pelvic organs are able to move forward into their normal positions against the belly. We'll explore this more as we move through the sequences, but what you simply need to know now, is choosing to breathe in this way, is helping look after your most womanly parts.

As soon as you pay attention to your breathing, it immediately changes, and that is the whole point. Breathing retraining entails bringing our awareness to our breath and to treat with respect something that is so important to maintaining our lives. Enjoy the breath and keep breathing until you enjoy the breath. Integrating healthy breathing into our everyday life is perhaps the most practical work we can do on behalf of our mental and physical wellbeing.

EASY POSE

As we explore the foundations of breathing I'd like to touch on one foundation pose that will pop up frequently in the sequences, **Easy Pose**, or the pose of ease. Exploring this seated-meditation pose, will give you an opportunity to see how your breath reacts differently when your body is well aligned, head over heart, heart over pelvis. Not only that, exploring this particular pose in depth, will set you up for a really nourishing practice.

We live in a culture that spends so much time sitting in chairs and on toilets, that we tend to lose our connection to getting down nice and low while sitting up tall. So if you can't sit comfortably in a cross-legged seat right now, that's totally ok. You're certainly not alone. This will gently happen over time, so be kind to yourself, and simply take your options, to help ease you into **Easy Pose**.

Give it a go...

Sit on some firm padding, maybe a yoga mat or on a carpeted floor, and cross your legs. As soon as you arrive, begin to pay attention to your foundation - we want to build from the ground up. Use your hands to move the fleshy parts of your buttocks aside so you can feel your sitting bones connecting with the earth. Your sit bones are the prominent bones at the lowest part of your pelvis that make contact with the ground, and are officially called the ischial tuberosities. If your weight is not centred on your sit bones, you have no chance of sitting upright with ease.

By feeling your sit bones plugging into Mother Earth you're bringing a deep sense of awareness to how you're holding your body and how it sits in relation to the earth. In this position - with your weight fully in your sit bones - you should be able to rock slightly forward using only the hip joints, not your spine. Use the power of your sit bones to push down in order for you to come up, feeling like a string attached to your crown is softly pulling you towards the sky.

The outer edges of your feet should be connected to the floor, so you feel nicely balanced and stable in this chair you've created using your body. Your hands will rest on your knees; have your palms facing up, so you're not creating any extra tension in your posture. There is a tendency to press down if the palms are facing down. So we want to switch them off. Let them disengage so they don't try to get in on the action! More importantly however, is the energy flows better when your palms are turned up.

Smile and as you do, start to tune into the energy of your pelvic floor, rising up through your front body, giving you a gentle lift. Let your energetic body create the physical lift, as opposed to just forcing your

torso into an upright position. If you have trouble finding this gentle lift, you can simply loop your shoulders forward, up and back, letting your shoulder blades melt down your back, feeling weight in your elbows, as your heart gently comes forward, creating space across your chest.

As you feel the lift through your spine, find places where you can ground and anchor; perhaps in your sit bones, the tops of your thighs, your shoulders, your elbows. Let the tops of the thighs melt down and the hips and groin naturally open and release. Relax your jaw, soften your throat and breathe. Sit here for at least a few minutes, being aware of your breath; how it feels when you maintain that lift through your heart as your sit bone anchor down.

Easy Pose came about so the yogis could sit for extended lengths of time and meditate with ease. That's what is really important about this pose, if you want to find ease within it. You're focusing on being soft and present, while at the same time remaining active in the body, feeling the stretch created through our spine, as your sit bones root down and your crown draws towards the sky.

So what do you do if those does not feel easy for you? You take your options! The best way to adjust this posture so you can ease into it, is to get a firm cushion or pillow, or some folded blankets and place them under your booty. You'll know if you need a little extra support to lift your buttocks up if you feel your spine pulling you back as you sit in **Easy Pose**. You want to be able to sit up tall with your legs naturally drawing down. Sit at a height that allows the hip-sockets to be open and your lumbar spine neutral and relaxed.



What's nice about lifting up the hips, is you can find more ease in the spine, because the knees are dropping down below the hips sockets - drawing away them away - and making it easier to root your tailbone down into the earth, while at the same time rising up through the spine. This will ensure you're using your body in a way that helps you open as opposed to contract. Sitting in a chair is another option, simply make sure your feet are flat on the floor to ensure the hips and lower spine don't get out of balance, and the blood being distributed to the pelvis is balanced in respect to the two sides of your body.

All parts of the body are connected, so whichever option you choose, simply make sure you feel well-balanced and comfortable. Sitting well requires the geometry of the pelvis to be in optimum relationship with gravity. This is why when you come to **Easy Pose** - in whichever option you're taking - it's so important to consciously use the sit bones to ground down.

Sitting on the centre of these sit bones, you can yield your weight to gravity through them and stretch the spine upward, creating the correct flow of energy up the spinal column. These bones tap into a part of the brain that creates calming, grounding energy that also aids digestion. It takes abdominal effort to sit this way - meaning you're helping keep your sexual organs pinned in place - and your heart is lined up with you pelvis allowing the head to be supported by the heart.

Ask yourself: How can I invite more **Easy Pose** into your daily activities?

HOW TO USE THIS SEQUENCE

This sequence is not about learning how to breath a new way, it's about learning how to strip off the conditioning stopping you breathing *naturally*; letting go of those unhealthy breathing habits that have you only taking in enough air to survive, as opposed to enough air to fully thrive! To truly be *alive*! For that reason I encourage you to make it your mission as you explore the **Blissful Breath 30min Sequence** (and all the sequences) to keep your focus on the breath.

When you start out your mind will most likely be full of thoughts. Know that this is normal. Know also, that it may feel uncomfortable. Your job is simple: Every time you notice a thought hopping in, acknowledge it, smile at it, and let it go. Don't feel defeated if as soon as one thought leaves it's replaced by another, and then another. This is a conscious practice in awareness; learning to be aware of your thoughts without judgement.

If you continue to take this approach of noticing a thought, letting it go, and returning your focus to the breath, over time the thoughts will become less and less, until you're able to experience periods of time where you are thoughtless. And that is where the deep pleasures of life are to be found. Trust that if you commit to a regular practice and take this approach, the pleasure of stillness and thoughtless being will weave its way into your life.

**Every time you notice your mind wandering, bring your attention back to the breath.
It's the quickest way to get out of your mind and into your body.**

One important thing to remember however, is that every day will be different. This is not a race to thoughtlessness. Thoughtlessness is not a sign of accomplishment. The accomplishment comes in practising every day and letting the practice be what it needs to be, regardless of how many thoughts you needed to let go of. We are all on our own journey and that journey is perfect no matter how it looks or feel. It is a journey into self-love. Self-Love and Acceptance. Acceptance of what is.

LET'S GO...

You now know the theory. Don't expect to remember it all. That's why you'll come back to this playsheet and re-read it a few times over the coming weeks after you begin the actual practise. Yes I share a LOT in the information playsheets, but where the biggest learnings are to be had, is on the mat. Actually *doing* the practice, with one simple focus - the breath - will allow you to truly *feel* yourself. And that is how you will learn and grow.

Let your breath guide you deep into your each pose. Deep into yourself!

Before beginning your **Blissful Breath 30min Guided Audio**, familiarise yourself with the poses in the sequence by watching the video and if there are any poses that look a little challenging for where you're at right now, simply take a peek at the 'Other Ways' in the **Blissful Breath 30-min manual** for alternative ways of doing that pose. Don't get too caught up in reading the whole manual - there is a LOT of info there - get practising and gradually work your way through the Manual when you feel drawn to refine the poses and learn a little more about which poses give what benefits.

Most importantly, hit the mat. Make sure you're in a place where you won't be disturbed (Yep that means phone switched off), your Jade Egg already strung and coconut oil at the ready. To warm up your egg, I like to place it under my knee as I lie in **Base Position** or you may like to place it somewhere on your body like in your belly button or the curve of your throat. That way it will be warm when you're ready to sip it inside.

Turn on the **Blissful Breath 30-min guided audio** - that's there to guide you through each practice. Lay down in **Base Position** and breathe! As my voice begins to take you on a tour of your own body, have fun with it. As you will discover as you dive into the sequences, they are designed to bring all aspects of oneself out to play. So keep smiling, play, have a giggle, and most of all, enjoy being YOU.

Once you're finished, feel free to leave your Jade Egg inside as you move into your day. Jade is extremely healing and will continue to work its magic as long as it's there. That said, if your egg falls out, **DO NOT** push it back in. The egg has come out because your muscles are fatigued and need a rest. If you do leave your egg inside as you go about your day, just remember when you go to the toilet that it's still inside. Until you build vaginal strength, there is the tendency for it to fall out as you urinate.

Alternately, you can practice laying your egg. Drink a full glass of water after ryorui practice, to help the detox and healing happen. If you can make time, spend some time journaling after your practice. This can bring many insights and reflections that are healing to the mind and body and help you connect more deeply with your practice and how it's weaving its magic. Then as you make your way into your next activity, consciously bring your attention to your breath.

BLISSFUL BREATH 30MIN SEQUENCE RUNDOWN

POSES	TIMES
Love Wrap	2-min
Breast massage	3-min
Vulva Massage	3-min
Sipping	3-min
Pulse / Intention	1-min
Long Slow Breathing	1-min
Vaginal Squeezes	1-min
Clapping Scarecrow	1-min
Love Scoop Rest	30-sec
Pelvic Lifts	3-min
Back Hug	30-sec
Rock'n Roll	30-sec
Spinal Flex	3-min
Relaxation	3-min
Stretches	30-sec
Rock'n Roll	30-sec
Self-Love Blessing	2-min