

The Vedic Salute Basic Breathing Technique

Preliminary preparation:

Adopt a comfortable stance in Tadasana, palms to sides of thighs. Eyes closed or gaze lowered to 45°

Connect with the full three-part yogic breath:

1. Focus just beneath your ribcage, and inhaling allow this area to expand a little and exhaling to contract a little.... Keep the area below the navel lightly contracted, directing the inhale & exhale into the area just above the navel....the diaphragm is like a parachute and each time you inhale imagine your diaphragm flattening and descending, and each time you exhale your diaphragm relaxing and ascending..... Do several times.

2. Now see if you can create more movement, so inhaling your upper abdomen expands, then ribcage expands forwards, backwards and sideways and then exhaling the abdomen and then the ribcage relax.... Do several times.

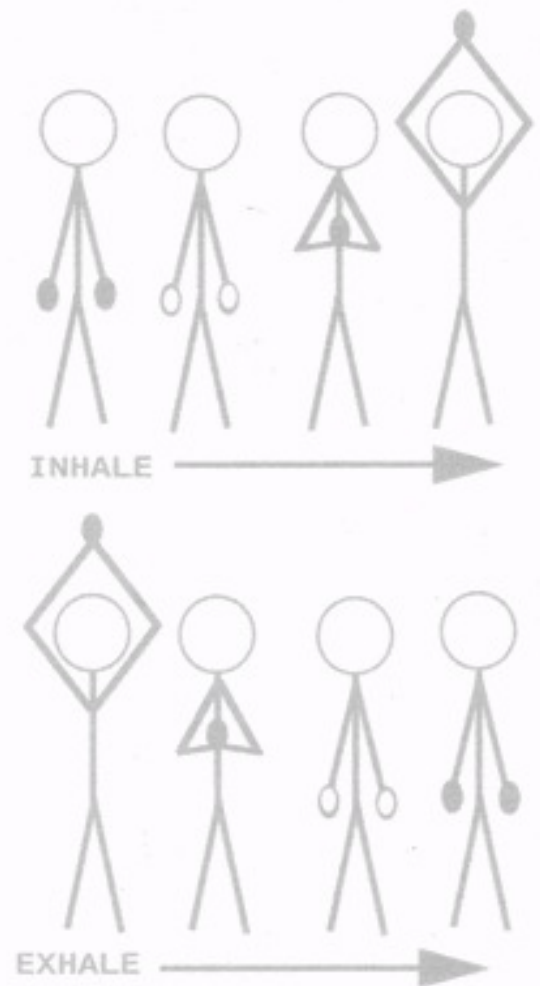
3. Then finally bringing in the collarbone area so inhaling your upper abdomen expands, then ribcage expands forwards, backwards and sideways and then the upper chest broadening, then exhaling the abdomen, the ribcage and the area beneath the collarbones relax.... Do several times keeping your breathing smooth and easy.

So now as we breathe more consciously and deeply we are still working the diaphragm and the abdominals but are also consciously recruiting the intercostal muscles between the ribs & the smaller higher respiratory muscles. [It is useful to know that the primary breathing muscles are the diaphragm, abdominals and also the intercostals; and when these are engaged rather than just the secondary muscles higher in the body we can have a much deeper breath and feel more grounded.]

The Vedic Salute

Having done a little yogic breathing lets work up to the full vedic salute in stages seeing if you can maintain the yogic three-part breath. At first we will all practice together, and then you can work alone at your own rate of breath and movement. As we move through the stages please stay at an earlier stage if you need to. Standing in Tadasana:

1. Inhaling show palms forwards, exhaling show palms backwards x3
2. Inhaling show palms forwards, lift hands to prayer pose, exhaling lower arms, show palms forwards then backwards x3
3. Inhaling show palms forwards, lift hand to prayer pose then above the head, exhaling lower hands to prayer pose, lower arms show palms forwards then backwards x3



Now continue at your pace staying at the stage that feels right or work up to the final stage, keeping your breath comfortable at all times moving just as fast or slow as suits the length of your breath. Let this be almost like a meditation, your movements travelling with your breath.

Make this your last one and come to stillness.

Cautions: Keep the breath smooth and easy without working beyond your capacity; care with shoulder injury

Benefits: Lengthens the breath; harmonizes breath, body and mind; concentrates mind