

Pranayama

Thoracic Breathing: Supine

Starting Position: in supine position, with your knees bent and your lumbar region in complete contact with the ground. It might be useful to tie your legs with a yoga belt in order to achieve a greater relaxation.

The hands are placed on the rib cage to act as witnesses to the movement. Stay alert and aware. Gently lock your abdomen and inhale focusing your attention on the expansion of the rib cage. While exhaling, relax the abdomen.

Phase 1: perception of the anterior movement. Place your hands on the chest, on the lower part of the breastbone. Inhaling, direct the breath towards the hands, sensing the upward expansion of the ribcage.



Phase 2: perception of the lateral movement. The hands are now placed laterally to the ribs. Inhaling, direct the breath towards the hands, sensing in particular the lateral expansion of the rib cage.



Phase 3: perception of the posterior movement. The hands are placed behind the back, in contact with the ribs. Inhale and direct the breath towards the hands, feeling the increase of pressure on the fingers; exhaling, feel the movement of the ribs in the opposite direction.



5 to 10 breaths for each phase.

At the end, remain in stillness for a few minutes visualizing the breath that, as you inhale, expands the chest from the center in every direction, and, as you exhale, withdraws towards a bright central point. At this stage, focus your attention in particular on the lateral expansion of the rib cage.

Contraindications: practicing late in the day is not recommended for nervous or sleepless subjects.

Benefits: thoracic breathing is an activating practice; isolating thoracic breathing helps to perfect the Full Yogic Breath.