

## Breathing Techniques for Adolescents

### Alternate Nostril Breathing

#### (Channel Clearing Breath – Sanskrit: Nadi Shodhana)

**Direct Aim:** To reduce mental turbulence often caused by anxiety and insomnia and helps foster a clear and alert mind. To connect the mind and body; to calm the central nervous system thereby calming both the mind and body.

**Indirect Aim:** To achieve, maintain, and preserve health and prevent disease in both mind and body.

#### Procedure:

1. Using your right hand, position your thumb over your right nostril closing the nostril.
2. Take an effortless breath in through your left nostril, at the end of the inhalation close the left nostril using your ring finger.
3. Lift your thumb away from your right nostril and exhale effortlessly through the right nostril.
4. Keeping the left nostril closed inhale effortlessly through the right nostril, at the end of the inhalation close the right nostril with your thumb and open the left nostril to exhale through the left nostril.
5. Continue to breathe effortlessly alternating between left and right nostrils.
6. After completing 10-20 full breaths finish the breathing technique by exhaling through the left nostril.

#### Notes:

*It is important to start Alternate Nostril breathing through the left nostril and end the technique through the left nostril.*

#### Extensions:

Alternative way of doing Alternate Nostril Breathing: breathe in and out through your right nostril 10 times in a row, then breathe in and out through your left nostril 10 times in a row. Notice the different effect on the body to alternating between left and right nostrils and breathing through each nostril several times in a row. In Yoga and Ayurveda, it is believed that breath through the right nostril is energizing and breath through the left nostril is calming and soothing.

Alternate Nostril Breathing using breath holds: practice as per the directions above but breath in for 4

counts, hold your breath for 4 counts and then breath out through the alternate nostril for 4 counts.

Some more advanced techniques include specific duration ratios for the inhalation and exhalation. A qualified teacher in these instances should teach these techniques.

### **Middle Schoolers:**

It is important to lead Middle Schoolers through this technique, as it must be done accurately.

The teacher-guide can lead Middle Schoolers through the *Extensions* alternate ways of using Alternate Nostril Breathing techniques according to the effect needed.

### **High Schoolers:**

Once High Schoolers have learned this technique they could use it as needed and they can include the *Extensions* alternate ways of using the technique according to what effect is needed.