

## Breathing Techniques for Adolescents

### Complete Breath (Sanskrit: Dirgha)

**Direct Aim:** To develop trust and the ability to connect with others appropriately. 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. Sit comfortably with a straight spine, or lie in a comfortable position.
2. Focus on the low back and take a deep relaxing breath through your nostrils focusing on breathing into the low back (the bottom of your lungs) while ballooning the belly outwards as in Deep Belly Breathing.
3. Repeat this several times visualizing the air moving into the lower part of your lungs.
4. Now begin with the second level of this breath. Breathe into the middle of your lungs – the thoracic area of the lungs – do this by expanding the ribs which will help move the air into the middle cavity of the lungs.
5. Repeat this several times visualizing the air moving into the middle area of the lungs.
6. Now begin the third level of this breath. Breathe into the upper areas of your lungs. To pull the breath into the upper area of the lungs, think about breathing into the top of the lungs near your clavicle area (collar bones).
7. Once you've practiced this breathing technique into the specific areas of your lungs practice the complete breath several times drawing breath into the lower part of the lungs, then into the middle thoracic area and then again smoothly into the clavicle area. The breath should be smooth and sequential.

#### Extensions:

##### Back Breath - Child Pose Variation:

##### Child Pose Explanation:

### **Procedure:**

1. With bent knees sit on the soles of your feet with the top of your feet tucked underneath you – feet are touching.
2. Bend your body forward and put your forehead on the floor in front of your bent knees.
3. You may choose to open your knees wider than hip distance if you find this easier. However, in Child's Pose the feet always touch.
4. Place your arms and hands either by the sides of your bent body, or ahead of you flat on the floor but over your head. Please note, if your knees are not touching then you will not bring your arms and hands down by the sides of your bent body.

### **Back Breath using Child's Pose:**

One student takes Child Pose and another student kneels next to this student placing his/her hands on the back of the student in Child Pose.

The student in Child Pose breathes slowly into his/her low back and into the partner's hands – do several breaths here.

The student then breathes into his/her midback while the partner moves his/her hands onto the midback – do several breaths here.

Then the student breathes into the upper back/shoulder blade area and repeats several breaths. Students switch roles.

### **Middle Schoolers:**

Teacher-guide directs the Middle Schoolers in the Complete Breath experience.

Back Breath-Child Pose variation to be done with same sex students.

### **High Schoolers:**

Students help each other with the Complete Breath experience.