

## **3-Part Breath**

Sit comfortably either in a chair or on the ground using something to elevate and support your hips off the ground. Make sure your spine is growing long towards the sky and your feet or legs are settled on the ground. Take 3-5 large, full breaths in and sigh them out, letting go of any initial tension you feel. You might even want to move or stretch a little to rid yourself of some tension, preparing yourself for some breath work. If comfortable, use your nose to do the breathing exercises. This will help slow it down.

### **Lower Belly Breath**

Let your hand rest on your lower belly and exhale completely. Image a balloon in your lower belly and, as you inhale, imagine that breath pushing into the your pelvic floor, lower back spine, and your belly-button area. As you exhale, feel your breath completely leave this area. Imagine the balloon to be deflated. You can even slightly contract your lower belly/pelvic floor to fully empty yourself of breath. Pause for as long as is comfortable on the exhalation. Sense the stillness and empty of having no breathe coming in or out. Then invite in the inhalation again, slowly and steady, feeling the breath push into your hand and filling the imaginary balloon again.

### **Upper Belly Breath**

Let your hand rest on your upper belly, right where your ribcage starts to narrow into the breast-bone. Exhale completely. Imagine a belt going around your rib-cage, around your side-ribs, mid-back, and below your breast-bone. This imaginary belt is mimicking where your diaphragm is located inside your rib-cage. As you exhale, feel the breath completely leave this area. Imagine the belt to actually become loose. Pause for as long as it feels comfortable at the base of your exhalation. Feel the inner stillness inside of you. You might even become aware of some anxiety or fear. That's okay if you do. From the stillness of the exhalation, then imagine a slow inhalation filling the belt all the way around you. You might notice that it is more difficult to breathe into one part of the belt compared to another. With every breath, allow the imaginary belt around your rib-cage to become more and more full.

### **Chest/Heart Breath**

Gently allow your hand to rest on your breast-bone, directly over your heart center. Exhale completely. Imagine your two lungs like two half-galloon plastic milk jugs. As you inhale, allow the breath to fill the entirety of your lungs: front, back, inner, outer, upper and lower. Physically, allow your breath to penetrate behind your collar-bones, your breast-bone, your shoulder blades, and your upper back spine. Notice where the breath does not easily go. Be gentle and respect those areas. In time, it'll go there. Exhale and allow all breath to leave your lungs. Feel them to be empty and still. Wait at the base of the inhalation and pause for as long as it is comfortable. Whenever the inhalation would like to come in, allow it to enter with conscious awareness of it filling up the lungs.

### **3-Part Breath—Bringing it all together**

With one hand on your lower belly and the other on your breast-bone, empty your breath completely. Imagine the breath to be like water slowly filling a glass of water. Fill up your torso with breath, starting with your lower belly, then your upper belly, and finally you chest. Take your time. Go as slowly as it is comfortable for you. You can pause gently as each section is full with your breath. Pause at the top with your breath completely full. Then, slowly allow the exhalation to drain your breath from you all the way back to your base, while allowing your posture to remain lengthened toward the sky. Pause at the base of your exhalation for as long as you can tolerate it.