

# Belly Breathing

## *What is it*

- Healthy breathing moves through the body like a wave.
- The breath begins by expanding the belly and then moving upward through the chest. It is released by letting the air flow from the chest and then the belly.
- Belly breathing is slow, deep, and full; it helps us feel calm, grounded and stable.
- Shallow chest breathing maintains the stress response while belly breathing promotes the relaxation response.

## *How to do it*

- When practicing belly breathing, put one hand on your abdomen and one hand on your chest, close or lower your eyes.
- First, breathe out fully. Then, slowly breathe in, letting your belly expand. Imagine you are gently filling up a balloon in your belly.
- Allow the breath to move up like a wave to expand the chest.
- Now let go, breathe out slowly and feel the wave ebbing; the balloon emptying and your chest and belly flattening.
- The more fully you exhale, the easier it is to breathe in deeply.
- With every breath imagine you are connecting to the universe.
- Breathe in relaxation, breathe out tension.
- Practice breathing this way for 5 minutes twice a day.

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