

A breath of fresh air

Improve your breathing technique and you have an instant means of boosting your energy levels, relaxing mind & body and improving digestion etc. You can start today.

by Dónal Ó hÓbáin

We are powerful breathing systems, pumping air into and out of our bodies many times each minute. From our very first breath as a newborn baby we are sustained through our lives by the air around us. We can survive for weeks without food, for days without water,

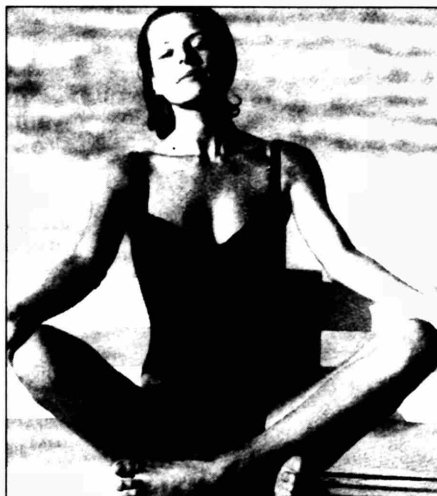
but without air we could not last more than a few minutes. By following the steps set out below, you will learn to make the most of your breathing and will feel better as a result. In order to enjoy the many health-building benefits of our wonderful breathing system, we must breathe long and deeply. This can pose a problem for some people because they have become shallow breathers who fill only the upper portion of their lungs when they inhale. This shallow breathing is usually the result of a physically inactive lifestyle, particularly a lifestyle which involves a lot of sitting, either at work, in the car or at home. To breathe deeply, we must inhale the breath into the lower and middle parts of our lungs - which is exactly what we did as infants. If you observe a baby breathing, you will notice that it is its tummy that rises up and down with the breath and

not its chest. So when you begin your deep or 'complete' breathing practice you will find that you will make excellent progress because you will simply be relearning a skill you once had - one which is natural to your body.

Benefits of Complete Lung Breathing

Correct breathing of pure fresh air has many excellent health-building benefits to offer us.

A The increased supply of oxygen into the lungs is transferred to the blood in which it is transported to every living cell in the body. Because oxygen is the 'flame' with which we 'burn' or metabolise our food for energy, we get an immediate improvement in our feeling of wellbeing. We produce more energy and have less waste left over to be stored as fat or toxins.



B When breathing in fresh air we absorb into our bodies life-giving 'prana' (a yoga word for life-energy). This charges up our 'batteries' and builds a powerful store of energy.

C Holding a complete breath is very stimulating to the endocrine glands, bringing them into balance and helping them to function efficiently. One of the many benefits of this is that the metabolic rate is normalised. For overweight people with a

slow metabolism there may be a weight loss as the metabolism speeds up and a weight gain for underweight people with very fast systems.

D Blood pressure begins to normalise after a period of practice. However, people with VERY high blood pressure should check with their doctor before beginning this practice and should proceed very gently in the beginning.

Dissolving Tension

This method of breathing is very relaxing for the whole body and particularly for the heart. When exhaling, you can visualise your whole body relaxing with all the tension dissolving and clearing out with the breath. When your mind is focused on the relaxing rhythmic flow of the breath, the negative effects of stress dissolve and you become clear and relaxed. Our lungs are cleansed and strengthened by correct breathing. They function much more efficiently in powering the body with plentiful amounts of oxygen. They empty themselves completely ridding us of toxins and waste products. Healthy and strong lungs are much more resistant to disease and ills of all forms.

Conclusion

As we must continue to breathe every minute of our lives, we may as well do so in the best possible manner. Decide now to spend as much time as possible out in the fresh air. Practice complete breathing daily. Try doing it in the morning for a wonderful waking-up effect - much better than tea or coffee. Enjoy all the wonderful positive benefits available from using your lungs in the way they were designed to be used.

Here is your 4-step guide to better breathing

1 Find some place where the air is fresh and pure, and full of oxygen. Outdoors is best, if at all possible, or at the very least beside some open windows. Lie down and relax. (Later you can practise standing up.)

2 Place your hands on your abdomen and exhale completely through the mouth. When exhaling, first empty your chest, next the area of your ribs and finally pull in your tummy to expel all the stale air from your lungs.

3 Relax all physical effort and pause for a moment before inhaling through your nose. Direct the breath downwards to the lower part of your lungs. It helps if you visualise the breath filling up your tummy because your abdomen does indeed rise as you breathe deeply. Continue inhaling

and you will find that your ribs expand as the middle part of your lungs fills with air. Finally, your chest will rise as you complete your inhalation, having filled your lungs from the very lowest part to the very top.

4 Hold this breath in a relaxed way for as long as you find comfortable, allowing your mind to focus on the sensation of your body becoming invigorated and energised. Then exhale as before, emptying the chest, ribs and tummy in that order. Pause for a moment before inhaling again.

Note of Caution

Practice for about five minutes a day, but as this method of complete breathing is a powerful and effective method of cleansing the body of toxins and building health you should proceed at a moderate pace allowing your body to adjust gradually.

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BODY SCULPTING



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- Firm up bust
- Boost energy levels
- Tone up tummy, hips & thighs
- Balance your diet for body shaping & fat reduction

This course is a unique approach to weight loss, shaping up and achieving fitness. Our unique combination of stretching, posture improvement and muscle-toning exercises will reshape problem areas - tummy, hips, thighs, bust etc.. We have distilled the knowledge and skills developed over 20 years of shaping up and fitness training to bring you the essential Body Sculpting Programme. Let it work for you. Our nutrition plan will show you how to lose fat, firm up and look great. Successful dieting has never been easier. You will find the course gets you the results you are looking for. This course is truly a unique approach to weight loss,

shaping up and achieving fitness. Our classes will feature:

EXERCISE

A unique combination of stretching, posture improvements and muscle-toning exercises will reshape problem areas, tummy, hips, thighs, bust etc. The workout, while thorough is not exhausting and is suitable for all age groups.

NUTRITION

Our nutrition plan will show you how to lose fat, firm up and look great but without starving or feeling deprived.

MOTIVATIONAL

You can rely on our instructors to give you every encouragement you need and as we include relaxation and

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A key ingredient in any successful class is the enjoyment factor. The Body Sculpting classes are very enjoyable from day one and even more so when the results become apparent very quickly.

The Body Sculpting course is run over a period of 6 weeks and costs £30.00 (payable on enrolment)

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- GALWAY** St. Nicholas' Parochial Hall, Woodquay. Monday 26 Sept. 8.00pm-9.30pm (091) 753114(01) 830 4998
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- FERMOY** Holy Family Centre, Pres. Entrance, College Road. Monday 26 Sept. 8.00pm-9.30pm (025) 31320
- CORK CITY** Connolly Hall Wednesday 28 Sept. 7.30pm-9.00pm (021) 276364
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