

EFFORTLESS DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING

Put one hand on your belly just below the bottom of your ribcage. Does it move as you breathe?

1. BREATHE OUT (EXHALE) THROUGH YOUR MOUTH.

To exhale, use your abdominal muscles (not your hand) to slowly squeeze your belly flat as if to squeeze air out of a balloon.

Can you let your face, neck, shoulders and chest remain relaxed?

Does the hand resting on your belly move toward your spine as you exhale?

2. CLOSE YOUR MOUTH. TO INHALE, DO NOTHING. LET YOUR BELLY EXPAND AS AIR FLOWS IN THROUGH YOUR NOSE.

Let your abdominal muscles relax and your belly expand outward.

Let your face, neck, shoulders and chest remain relaxed.

Does your hand feel as though it is resting on a balloon that is being inflated?

If you feel uncomfortable or lightheaded, you may be breathing too fast or too deeply.
Or you may be lifting your shoulders or expanding your chest at the beginning of each breath.

Can you let the length of time for your exhale increase by a second or two, slowing and reducing the volume of the stream of air across your lungs?

What happens if you rest one hand lightly on your chest? Is it easier to tell whether your chest is moving, so you can better isolate the movement of the diaphragm?

If you practice watching your profile in a mirror, does that help you reduce chest movement and increasingly isolate the movement of your diaphragm?

Is slow, diaphragmatic breathing getting easier?