

Core Breathing is a breathing technique that has a wide range of uses and benefits. It can be a good breathing technique for when we have no special purposes for the breath in our *Serenity Yoga* practice. It uses your whole body, moving the breath up from behind the navel (your abdominal core), along the spine (your central core) and opens up your chest to complete the breath, before returning the breath down in a wide loop, back to your belly.

The result is that it paces and relaxes your breathing; it calms you; it centers your body and your mind; trains your breathing to involve your whole body; it produces deep relaxation inside your whole body. It's great for meditation, since it keeps your body open and relaxed. It's a powerful contributor to your chanting skills by keeping all the resonating pathways open and soft. For those of you interested in your Energy Body, *Core Breathing* moves through most of the major chakras, circulating the breath along the entire energy pathway.

When mastered, these breaths become full and relaxed. Before you begin *Core Breathing*, it's good to learn *The Wave* and have practiced visualizations that soften the breath while engaging the whole body, like *Waves on the Shore*, *The Fountain* and *The Sponge*. (See links at the end of this article.)

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Main Benefits: Paces and relaxes breathing; centers the body and the mind; trains breathing with the whole body; calms; allows deep relaxation inside the body; clears and cleanses most major energy centers; circulates energy within the energy body.

Body Parts Used by This Posture: Abdominals; Upper, Middle & Lower Back; Obliques; Neck & Shoulders

Warm Up With: Abdominal Lifts; Breathing Warm Up 1, 2 or 3; Butterfly Breathing; Simple Side Bend; Breathing Warm Up 1, 2 & 3; Chest Expansion poses; Wood Chopper, Bust Expansion, Eagle's Wings, The Hug; Triangle poses; Twists; The Fountain; Waves on the Shore

Build Up to with: Abdominal Lifts; Abdominal Breathing; Chest Breathing 1, 1B, 2, 2B; The Wave; The Fountain

Builds You Up for: Breathing Exercise 17 – Relaxing Your Internal Organs; Breathing Exercise 18 – Relaxing Your Breathing; Breathing into Your Spine; Chanting; Meditation; Breathing Themes 16A, 16, 17, 18, 22A, 22B, 22C.

Alternative Exercises: *The Wave*, *The Fountain*, *The Sponge*



Best for Flexibility or Strength: Flexibility & strength

Traditional Pose Type: Breathing Exercise

Good for These Practice Goals: Singing; Voice Work; Better Breathing; Better Sleep, Bus, Chair & Office Friendly; Energy Healing; Pregnancy Yoga; Seniors Yoga; Sports in General, and including: Running, Martial Arts, Golf; Clearing Cleansing & Energizing of Belly, Solar Plexus, Heart, & Throat Chakras; Useful during chanting from the Belly, Solar Plexus, Heart or Throat; Calm; Focus, Peace of Mind

Recommended for These Health Conditions: Frozen shoulders; breathing difficulties including: allergies, asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, lung surgery, rhinitis; cancer; fibromialgia; chronic headaches & migraines; high blood pressure; menopause & pre-menopause; hyperactivity; attention deficit disorder; sleeping difficulties; mind racing; calming during pregnancy.

Energy Center Used: Root, Belly, Solar Plexus, Heart – and, on a good day, Third Eye and Crown.

Learn First: *The Wave*; *The Fountain*; *The Sponge*

Core Breathing builds on *The Wave* breathing, *The Fountain* and the *Sponge*. It can help to be comfortable with these before moving on to this exercise.

Beginner's Method

This will use the skills you've mastered from *The Fountain*. If you don't know that visualization yet, take some time to learn it and use it. Then come back here and discover the magic that it brings to Core Breathing.

- ☞ Imagine there is a pool of warm water in your belly.
- ☞ This pool is at the base of a fountain.
- ☞ The center tube for this fountain is the center line of your body, a core tube that runs in line with your spine.
- ☞ The tube to the fountain opens up in your chest.
- ☞ As you breathe in, you're drawing water up from the pool, along the center tube.
 - The water burst free inside your chest, splashing throughout the inside of your chest.
- ☞ As you breathe out, the water is tumbling down around the inside of your body, returning to the pool in your belly.



Softening Core Breathing

After you've become very comfortable with the Beginner's Method of Core Breathing, add this next step. It will use the skills you've acquired in *The Sponge*.

- ☞ Start by imaging the pool of warm water in your belly.
 - **This time – take the time to feel the water softening your belly, dissolving tensions there, warming the entire area.**
- ☞ As you breathe in, you're drawing the water up from the pool.
 - Feel its warmth climbing along the center of your body.
 - Then it comes to rest at the pool in your belly again.
- ☞ As you finish breathing in, the water is bursting free inside your chest.
- ☞ *Breathing out*, feel it spreading warmth, softening your entire chest.
- ☞ As you continue breathing out, the water is pool back down to your belly
 - It's taking its time on the way down, soaking its way through all the muscles, bones, tissues,
 - Warming them and softening them

Key Notice how this allows your body to feel softer deep inside, less tight.

Advanced Core Breathing

This is essentially the same idea, only you **let go of the concept of water and replace it with feeling your breath** moving from your belly and along your core channel, up into your chest and down to your belly again.

- ☞ Feel your breath as a pool in your belly.
- ☞ Feel it circulating, warming, softening as it lifts up along the core of your body, opens up your chest and sinks back down into your belly.



Advanced Core Breathing for Energy Workers

Once you've mastered the basics of *Core Breathing* and are comfortable with the advanced version, you can do this variation in order to circulate and clear energy within your *Energy Body*.

Instead of visualizing water or breath, imagine your belly is full of bright, clear, warm light. (It can be water colour you want.) Then feel the light circulating along your core channel, up into your chest and down to your belly again.

- ☞ Take your time to feel the warmth of it
- ☞ Feel it clearing each area of your body as it passes by.
- ☞ Notice that, with each breath, each time the light circulates, it makes you clearer and brighter inside.