

Dandelion Breathing

(Green Level)

This is a gentle visualization designed to help you soften your breathing. The ideal breath is not only well paced, using well toned muscles that are fully ready to engage, but it's also relaxed and 'soft', unlaboured, unforced. As you learn to soften your breathing you will free up more energy, leaving you feeling more energized throughout your day. *Dandelion Breathing* is also a great exercise for asthmatics or for anyone who is recovering from breathing or lung issues.

It's important to realize that 'softening' the breath does not mean allowing it to become more shallow. After all your work in Red, Orange and Yellow Levels of *Serenity Yoga*, we do not want you to go back to shallow breathing. It's possible to have good, full, well rounded breathing that is also soft. Visualizations like this one will help you learn how to do that.



Main Benefits:

Softens & relaxes breathing. Very calming.

Body Parts Used by This Posture: Abdominals; Chest – front, back and sides; Neck and Shoulders.

Compensating Pose: Leg Fold 1

Warms You Up for / Builds You Up for: Green and Purple Level Practice; Breathing Exercise 17 & 18; Relaxed Breathing 1, 2 & 3;

Build Up to with / Warm Up with: Abdominal Lifts 1 or 2; Breathing Warm Up 1, 2 or 3; Complete Breath, Simple Breath, Simple Side Bend, Wood Chopper 1, 2 or 3; Chest Expansion 1, 3 or 3; Bust Expansion; Hug, Eagle's Wings; Cat 1 or 2; Puppy; Sun Salutations; Moon Salutations; Abdominal Breathing; Chest Breathing 1, 2, 2b; *The Wave*; *The Sponge*; Relaxed Breath 1, 2 or 3

Best for Flexibility or Strength: Flexibility

Traditional Pose Type: Breathing Exercise; Meditation

Good for These Practice Goals: Asthma; Singing; Voice Work; Better Breathing, Better Sleep, Bus, Office and Chair Friendly; Calming; Energy Healing; Pregnancy Yoga; Seniors' Yoga; Sports in general, especially Running, Biking, Swimming, Martial Arts, Golf; Chanting & Meditation Warm Up; Dropping stress quickly.

Recommended for These Health Conditions: Arthritis & osteoporosis in general; compressed disc in middle or lower back; allergies, asthma, bronchitis, lung removed, pneumonia, rhinitis; cancer; fibromialgia, headaches & migraines; heart condition; high blood pressure; IBS; chronic injury or lower back or shoulders; menopause & pre-menopause; menstruating (having your period) at this moment; pregnancy; sleeping difficulties; hyperactivity; attention deficit, TMJ

Energy Center Used: Belly, Solar Plexus, Heart, Throat

Alternative Exercises: The Sponge

**This is a simple visualization that can be done anywhere, any time you need it.
For any session, do it as long as you like. 1 – 3 minutes is good.**

Dandelion Breathing goes particularly well if you've taken the time to warm up with stretches that loosen up your breathing muscles. *Breathing Warm Up 1, 2 or 3* work particularly well, as do: Abdominal Lifts 1 or 2; Breathing Warm Up 1, 2 or 3; Complete Breath, Simple Breath, Simple Side Bend, Wood Chopper 1, 2 or 3; Chest Expansion 1, 3 or 3; Bust Expansion; The Hug; Eagle's Wings; Cat 1 or 2; Puppy; Sun Salutations; Moon Salutations.

Tip The visualization goes even better if you do this to the sounds of nature on your audio player. To use music to enhance the experience, choose something with gentle, slow rhythms and minimal melody.



1. Start

Lying down, sitting, standing
(Lying down works best)

It will help if:

- your neck, spine and hips are lined up with each other
- and if you arms are by your sides or resting on your thighs.
- This will keep your breathing open and relaxed.

Take a moment to settle into place, feel your breathing settling down. Notice the flow of air as it comes and goes into and out of your body.

2. Next, turn your attention to the movements in your body as you breathe.

- ☞ Feel your belly, your chest lifting lightly, as if they are rising gently on a breeze.
- ☞ As the breeze subsides and your breath drops away, your chest and belly are softly dropping, floating downward.

3. The Visualization

- ☞ As you continue to feel your body floating on this cushion of air, you are becoming a piece of dandelion fluff, floating on the breeze.
- ☞ When the breeze lifts, your body lifts gently.
- ☞ When the breeze drops, your body begins to float slowly downward.