

Breathing, Movement and Healing Rituals



Emotions and Body Armor

- Emotion expresses itself through movement
- In order to suppress the expression of an emotion, you have to tense your muscles so they can't move
- Chronic suppression of emotions results in body armor (chronic muscle tension in various areas inhibiting feeling)



Breathing and Emotions

- Suppression of emotions also requires holding the breath
- Deep breathing is a major part of emotional healing work
- Every emotion has its own breathing pattern
- You can shift your emotions by shifting your breathing pattern



Abdominal Breathing



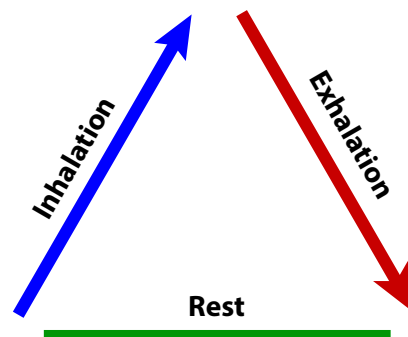
Breathing Exercise #1: Abdominal Breathing

- Lay on your back
- Place one hand on your stomach and the other on your chest
- Breathe deeply lifting the hand on your stomach, but not the hand on your chest
- Breathe in through the nose and out through the nose
- If you can't do this, you may need to work on a hiatal hernia



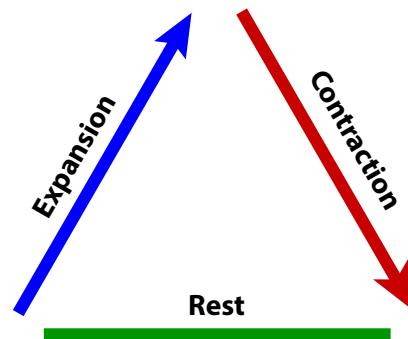
Normal Breathing Pattern

- Normal breathing has three parts
 - Inhalation
 - Exhalation
 - A pause or period of rest
- The period of rest is usually longer than the inhalation or exhalation



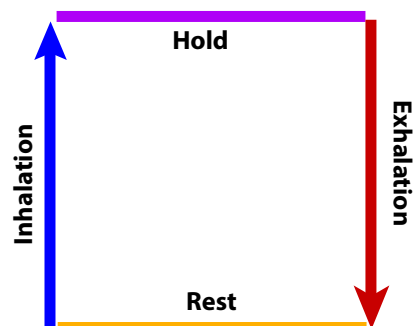
Breathing and Energetics

- These three parts of the breath correspond with the three basic energetic principles
 - Expansion
 - Contraction
 - Equilibrium



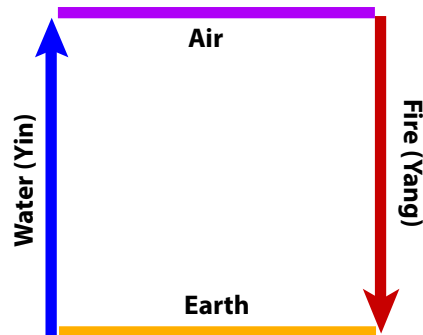
“Squared” Breathing Pattern

- There is a 4th part of the breath cycle which can also be observed in some breathing patterns
- It is holding your breath after inflating the lungs



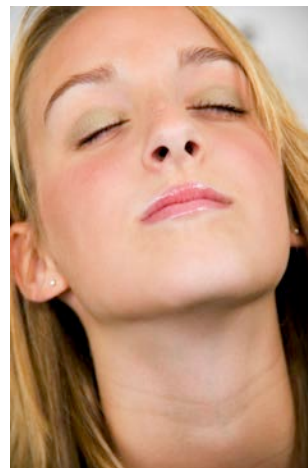
For “Elements” of Breathing

- These four parts of the breath correspond to the cycle of the four elements
 - Inhalation = Water or Yin (Expansion)
 - Holding = Air (Disequilibrium)
 - Exhalation = Fire or Yang (Contraction)
 - Rest = Earth (Equilibrium)

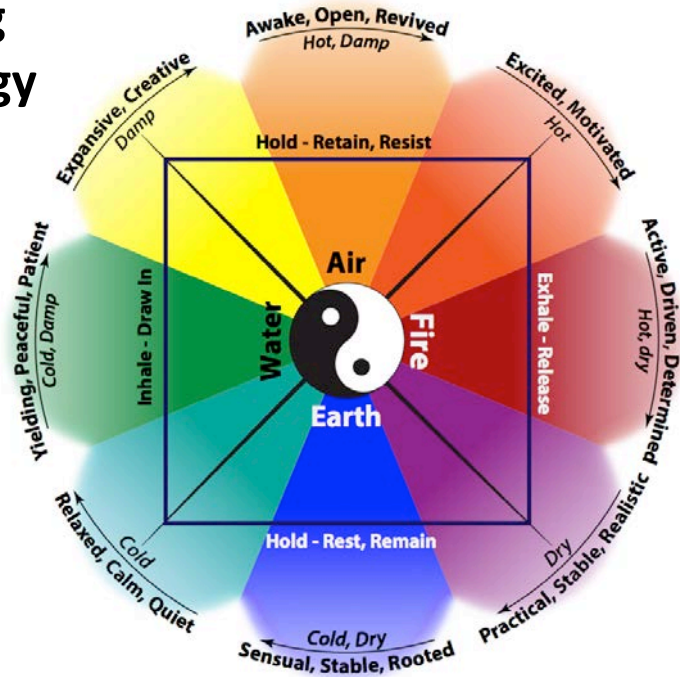


Breathing Exercise #2 Squaring the Breath

- Lay on your back
- Breathe in through the nose and out through the nose
- Inhale for the count of four “in-2-3-4”
- Hold the air in your lungs for the count of four “hold-2-3-4”
- Exhale for the count of four “out-2-3-4”
- Rest for the count of four “rest-2-3-4”



Breathing and Energy



Energetics of Anger



Energetic Pattern for Anger

- Slow inhalation building up energy charge in the body
- Shoulders tense, fists clench, face tightens
- Followed by rapid, forced exhalation (yelling, shouting, etc.) and a tendency to push or punch forward
- Anger is “yang” breathing as it focuses on pushing air out to force things away



Anger Healing Rituals

- Hitting pillows on your bed (with fists or a tennis racket)
- Using a punching bag or just punching the air
- Taking a self-defense class
- Erecting an effigy and throwing things at it
- Screaming (can be done silently)
- Chopping wood

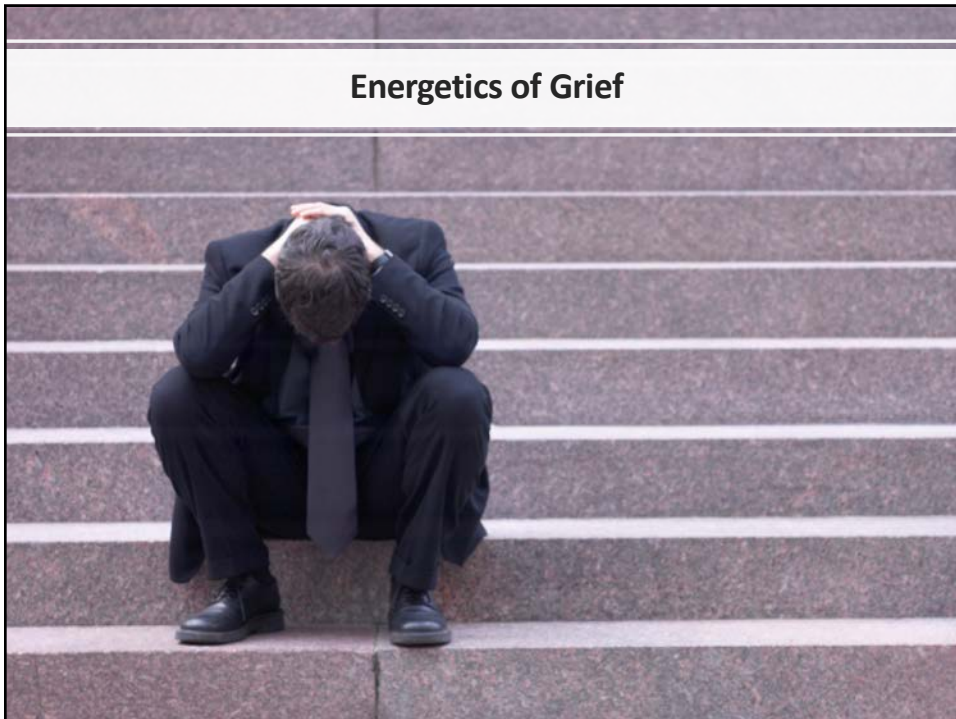


Demolition Anyone?

- You can't destroy someone else's property, and you probably can't afford to destroy your own – so:
 - Find or build a small structure that you can safely destroy, then get a sledgehammer and demolish it
 - With every stroke of the sledgehammer and every primal scream you release anger and smash through pain, humiliation and helplessness
 - You assert your personal power and begin to feel powerful
 - A great way to release negative energy and build courage

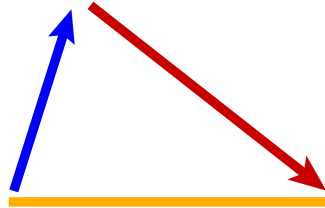


Energetics of Grief



Energetic Pattern for Grief

- Forced, difficult inhalation (gasping for air or struggling for breath)
- Long slow exhalation (sighing, wailing, moaning, etc.)
- Grief is a yin breathing pattern, a struggle to draw in energy



Breathing Exercise #3 Letting Go

- Sit up or lay on your back
- Inhale deeply through the nose
- Hold your breath for just a second
- Exhale deeply through the mouth
- Try to force as much air out of your lungs as you possibly can as you suck in your stomach and push upwards with your diaphragm
- Inhale again and repeat



“Letting Go” Rituals

- Write down the things you have lost or the troubles you have from the past on a piece of paper, then:
 - Burn the paper and imagine these things are gone forever
 - You can also bury the paper and think, these things are dead and gone
 - Put slips of paper into helium balloons and release them, sending your troubles to the heavens
- Give away or otherwise get rid of photos or possessions that remind you of, or keep you stuck in, the past



Rituals To Help One Cope with Death

- Let go of something that is associated with the lost loved one
 - Burn it and watch the smoke ascend to heaven
 - Throw it in a river and watch the water carry it away towards the ocean
 - Dig a hole and bury it for the earth to recycle
 - Give possessions away to charity



Energetics of Fear



Instinctive Reactions to Danger

- **Fight** – get angry and fight back against what is hurting or threatening us
- **Flee** – run away from what is hurting or threatening us
- **Freeze** – when we perceive that fight or flight is not possible, we react by becoming immobile (in this state, although the body is not moving it is highly primed or tensed for movement)

