

THE IMPORTANCE OF BREATHING

Free Spirit Yoga and Pilates

Julia shields

13354 237 A. St.

Maple Ridge, B.C. V4R 2V9

604-463-0346 or 604-807-7512

Email: JULILA@freespiritryog.ca

To breathe correctly you must completely inhale and exhale, always squeezing every atom of impure air from your lungs. Imagine wringing every drop of water from a wet cloth.

Breathing is the most important physical principle to refine while practicing yoga or pilates or any other health and wellness program.

Three major functions of breathing are #1 to carry nutrients to all parts of your body, thus charging your body with more energy. #2 to carry away wastes, toxins and byproducts for elimination from the body. #3 to increase stamina.

Waste products produce restrictions within our body systems, such as tightness, restricted movement in our joints, fatigue, headaches and pain.

Drinking enough water also assists in waste elimination. Adequate water consumption improves muscle flexibility.

Breath holding during movement and exercise puts our bodies under an enormous amount of pressure, especially in the upper back and neck. We create internal pressure build up similar to a pressure cooker during breath holding. This wastes energy and effort on parts of our body not required. The outcome is less efficiency of the muscles being worked. For eg. Doing a yoga or pilates exercise with tension in the face, shoulders or neck is wasting all the effort that should be put into the body parts you are wanting to work.

Complete exhalations are as important as the inhalations. Keep the breathing relaxed and never force or strain. The fuller your exhalations the fuller and deeper your inhalations will be, thus improving the overall effectiveness of your workout. As you exhale gently pull your abdominals in towards your spine, as you inhale gently and fully expand your rib cage, trying to keep your shoulders relaxed. You should never feel strain or tightness in your throat when you are breathing, if you do you are trying to hard, back off and relax. If at any time you feel light headed or dizzy, relax your breathing, again you may be trying too hard.