

# MIB TITER

Take-IT-Easy, Relax~  
Wellness Program

2024

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# Introduction

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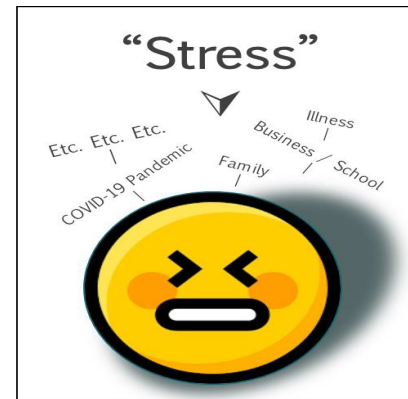
# Stress and Well-Being

Stress is deeply related to and intertwined with various aspects of our well-being psychologically and physiologically; it affects and is affected by many of environmental and lifestyle factors. People under chronic stress can find it difficult to effectively address addictive and unhealthy behaviors, such as overeating, high-sugar eating, overdrinking, smoking, and skipping exercise routines. This creates a problematic loop because these unhealthy behaviors cause more stress, increasing the risk of long-term oxidative stress in the body and further jeopardizing our well-being and health.

The COVID-19 pandemic is bringing profound changes in many aspects of life. Living in stressful times and coping with unforeseeable changes, the general public and their mental and physical well-being are being put into vigorous stress tests. Inevitably one has to adjust his way of living to a new normal.

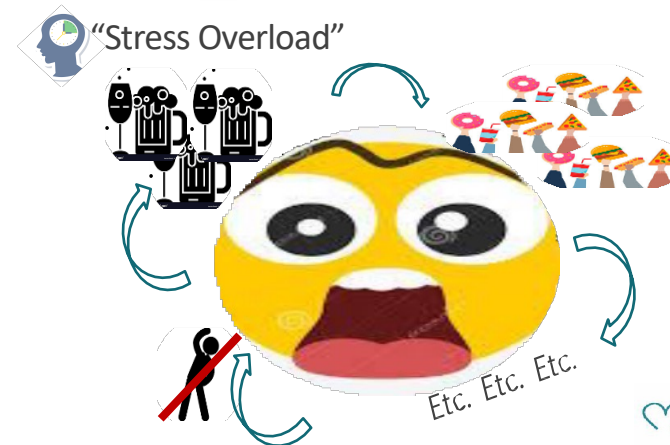
# Stress Response

- \* **Stress** is the body's reaction to harmful situations –real or perceived.
- \* During a **stress response**, our heart rate increases, breathing quickens, muscles tighten, and blood pressure rises.
- \* Stress, whether related to depression, environmental stressors, or perceived stress, is associated with increased release of neuro-hormonal factors predisposing people to metabolic syndrome, producing chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke, cancer, etc.



- ▲ Heart rate
- ▲ Breathing rate
- ▲ Muscles tension
- ▲ Blood pressure

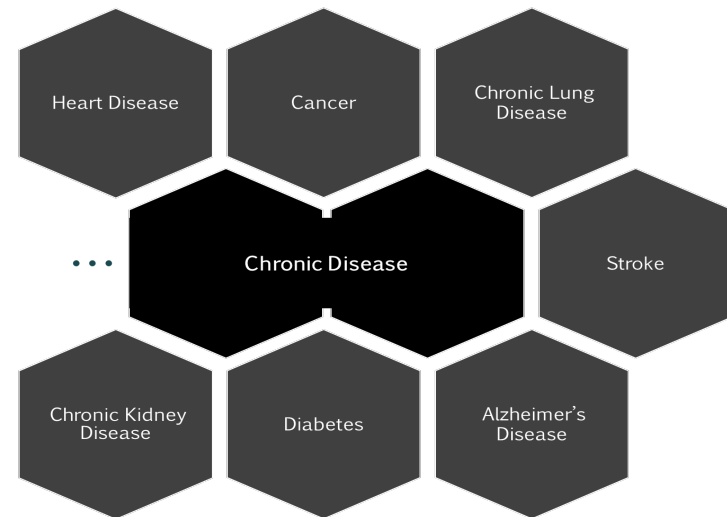
HerdJA. *PhysiolRev.* 1991;71(1):305-330



# Metabolic Syndrome and Chronic Disease

**Metabolic syndrome** may be diagnosed if one has three or more of the following symptoms:

- \* A waist circumference of 94cm or more in European men, 90cm in South Asian men, 80cm or more in European and South Asian women
- \* High triglyceride levels and low levels of HDL in the blood
- \* High blood pressure that's consistently 140/90mmHg or higher
- \* An inability to control blood sugar levels (insulin resistance)
- \* An increased risk of developing blood clots, such as DVT (deep vein thrombosis)
- \* A tendency to develop irritation and swelling of body tissue (inflammation)

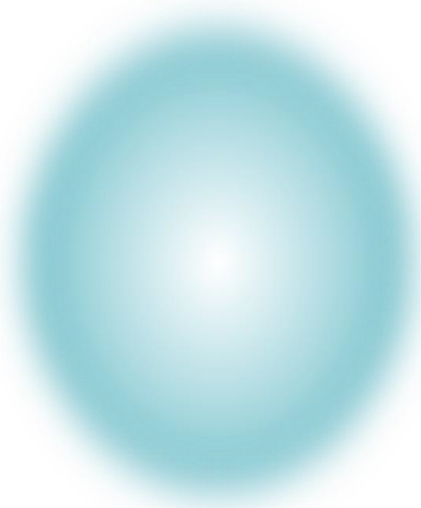


Grundy SM, et al. *Circulation*. 2005; 112:2735-2752

<https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/infographic/chronic-diseases.htm>

# What is Relaxation Response?

- \* **Relaxation Response (RR)** is a physiological and psychological state opposite to the stress or fight-or-flight response.
- \* RR is a hypothalamic-mediated reaction which results in decreased sympathetic nervous system activity, decreased heart rate, lower metabolism, and decreased respiratory rate.
- \* Research studies indicate various **mind-body interventions** can **reduce chronic stress and enhance wellness through the induction of RR.**
- \* Several studies also reported that the elicitation of RR and cultivation of mindfulness is an effective therapeutic intervention to counteract the adverse clinical effects of stress disorders that include: hypertension, anxiety, insomnia, chronic fatigue, rash, and premature aging.



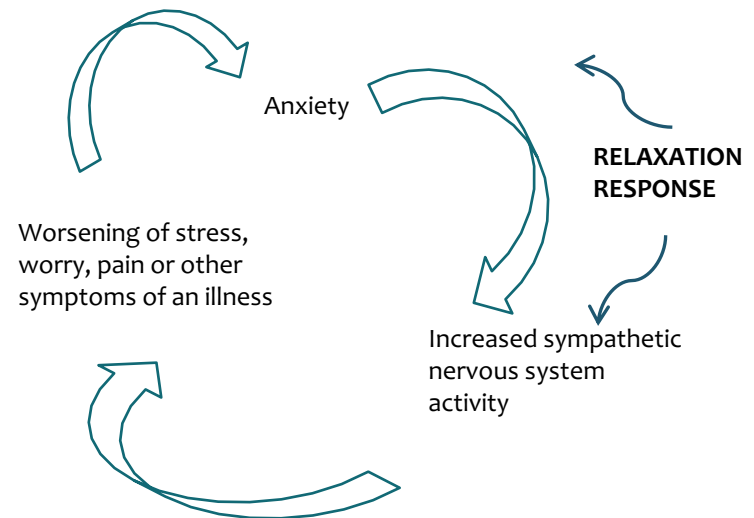
## Typical Relaxation Response

- ✓ Heart rate
- ✓ Breathing rate
- ✓ Muscles tension
- ✓ Blood pressure

Benson H, et al. Psychiatry. 1974;37(1):37-46

# Using the Relaxation Response to Reduce Stress

- \* RR can be elicited when an individual focuses on an object such as a word, sound, phrase, repetitive prayer, breath, or movement and disregards everyday thoughts. Regular (e.g., daily) practice of the techniques to elicit RR is recommended for sustaining its beneficial effects.
- \* **The TITER Steps** is a multi-modal program that blends posture and movement with focus and awareness for developing skills and habits to **elicit relaxation responses, cultivate mindfulness, reduce stress responses, and enhance resiliency sustainably**. Resiliency is the ability to adapt well, recover quickly, or thrive in response to stress, adversity, or trauma.



Benson H, et al. *Psychiatry*. 1974; 37(1):37-46

# Mindfulness and Relaxation

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# Mind Body Interventions

A Perspective on the Similarities and Differences between Mindfulness and Relaxation, Christina M Luberto et. al

- \* **Mind-body interventions** (medicine) are an evidence-based approach to health and healing focusing on interactions between the mind, body, and behavior.
- \* Mind-body interventions encompass diverse techniques that all aim to unite the mind and body to promote health and well-being. Examples include **meditation** (e.g., mindfulness meditation, loving-kindness meditation), **relaxation practices** (e.g., diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, guided imagery), and **meditative movement practices** (e.g., qi gong, tai chi, yoga—with characteristics of meditative state of mind, usually involving a focus of awareness on the body; some form of prescribed or sometimes spontaneous movement; explicit attention to the breathing; and a state of deep relaxation)
- \* Mindfulness and relaxation practices are two mind-body techniques mostly used by clinicians today.
- \* Mindfulness and relaxation practices have their theoretical foundation and intention, with similarities and differences in psychological and physiological effects.

# Differences Between Mindfulness and Relaxation

A Perspective on the Similarities and Differences between Mindfulness and Relaxation, Christina M Luberto et. al

## Mindfulness

### Theoretical foundation

- Third-wave CBT approach
- Automatic reaction patterns can contribute to suffering
- Experiential avoidance maintains psychological rigidity, exposure fosters flexibility
- Taking thoughts as facts can be problematic, cognitive de-centering undermines dominance of discursive thinking

### Intention of practices

- Noticing present moment events as they are facilitates conscious choice
- Emphasis on accepting present moment internal events to reduce struggle with own thoughts and feelings

### Examples of types of practices

- Body scan (notice physical sensations as they naturally occur throughout the body, raising interoceptive awareness and reactions to discomfort)
- Awareness of breath (notice the breath as it naturally occurs, redirect attention back to the breath when it wanders, letting go of attempts to control automatic processes)
- Sitting meditation (sequentially notice internal and external events such as sounds, thoughts, raising awareness of automatic patterns of thinking and reacting)

### Psychological outcomes and mechanisms

- Improvements in mood, stress and general well-being
- Improvements in nuanced emotional processes, including following brief, single-session practices

## Relaxation

- Traditional CBT approach
- Chronic stress and/or an overactive stress response cause disease
- Eliciting the relaxation response counters the stress response to reduce chronic stress
- States of relaxation provide access to psychological resources that build resiliency to improve health outcomes

- Elicit parasympathetic dominance
- Emphasis on changing present moment internal events

- Progressive muscle relaxation (purposefully relax muscles by systematically tensing and releasing specific muscle groups)
- Deep breathing (purposefully slow and deepen the breath)
- Guided imagery (generate imagined scenarios)

- Improvements in mood, stress, and general well-being
- Potential improvements in nuanced emotional processes but usually only after multi-session interventions

# Stress Reduction Programs

Common and Dissociable Neural Activity After MBSR and RR Programs, Gunes Sevinc et. al

## MBSR - Mindfulness

- \* Mindful body scan (emphasize paying attention to present moment sensory experience in each body area without trying to change anything and explicitly teaches practitioners that physical relaxation is not an aim of meditation practice)
- \* Mindful yoga (simple yoga postures done with a mindful attitude)
- \* Sitting meditation (which comprises watching the flow of breath and mental phenomena without trying to control these)

## RR - Relaxation

- \* Guided relaxing body scan (explicitly instructs practitioners to intentionally reduce arousal and muscle tension in each body area to decrease sympathetic activation),
- \* Focus word (mental repetition of a word, sound, or phrase),
- \* Breath counting and breath awareness

RR emphasizes the induction of a relaxed physiological state, hypothesized to be the opposite of the stress response. In contrast, the MBSR is hypothesized to work by cultivating a particular nonjudgmental attitude (mindfulness). Consequently, MBSR does not necessarily encourage relaxation but posits that a form of “meta-relaxation” may arise from the nonjudgmental acceptance of any given body state. MBSR is more associated with improvements in self-compassion and rumination.

# Behavioral Measures

Common and Dissociable Neural Activity After MBSR and RR Programs, Gunes Sevinc et. al

## Five Facet Mindfulness

### Observing:

Noticing or attending to internal and external experiences such as sensations, thoughts, or emotions

### Describing:

Labeling internal experiences with words

### Acting with Awareness:

Focusing on one's activities at the moment as opposed to behaving mechanically

### Nonjudgment of Inner Experience

Taking a nonevaluative stance toward thoughts and feelings

### Nonreactivity to Inner Experience

Allowing thoughts and feelings to come and go without getting caught up in them

## Other Measures

### Perceived Stress:

Situations appraised as stressful (i.e., unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloading)

### Self-Compassion:

Responding to feelings of inadequacy or suffering with self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and overidentification

### Rumination:

Tendencies to reflect on problems (defined as contemplative, intentional pondering of one's mood with a focus on problem-solving) and brood (passive and judgmental pondering of one's mood)

### Sleep Problem:

Reflect on problems like sleep onset latency, wake after sleep onset, total sleep time, sleep efficiency, shortness of sleep, insomnia symptoms, irritation, loss of energy, sleepiness

# Behavioral Outcomes

Common and Dissociable Neural Activity After MBSR and RR Programs, Gunes Sevinc et. al

## MBSR Mindful Body Scan – Mindfulness

“Be aware of the jaw, the hinge joint on either side of the face, and the jaw muscles.”

“Bringing attention to the cheeks, the muscles of the cheeks and face that express our many emotions, the sinuses, the ears, the outer ear, the ability to hear at this moment.”

## RR Body Scan– Relaxation

“Now bring awareness to your jaw, and as you exhale release any tension or clenching”

“Now feeling a wave of relaxation spreading down over your face, letting your cheeks release and soften so your whole face feels comfortable and relaxed.”

Both programs were successful in reducing perceived stress and sleep problems. RR increases in the “describing,” “acting with awareness,” “observing,” and “non-reactivity” facets. MBSR increases in the “observing” and “nonreactivity” facets, as well as increases in self-compassion and decreases in rumination



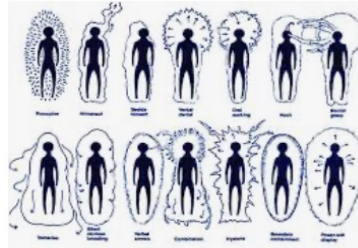
TITER: Take-IT-Easy, Relax~

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# Take-IT-Easy, Relax~ TITER Steps Overview

## \* TITER Standing

- \* Standing upright, relax
- \* Energy boosting standing
- \* Standing with awareness



## \* TITER Walking

- \* The happy foot fall
- \* Employ psoas muscle in walking
- \* Walking with awareness

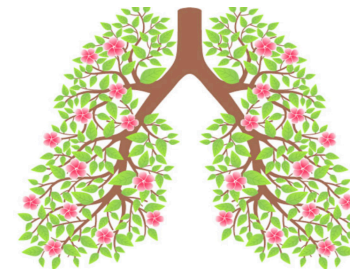


## \* TITER Breathing

- \* Breathe, relax, smile
- \* Diaphragmatic/Abdominal breathing
- \* Breathing with awareness

## \* TITER Sitting

- \* Sitting upright, relax
- \* Body scan – 4 lines relaxation
- \* Sitting with awareness





# TITER BREATHING

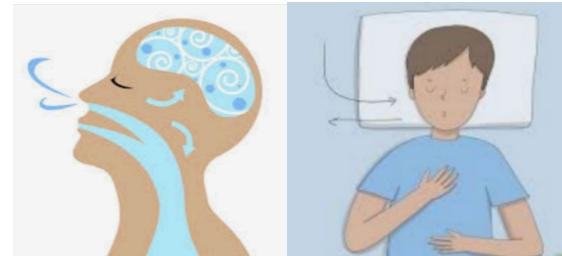
“Breath has patterns.  
Schemes create behavior.  
Breath is a behavior.  
Behavior represents the  
person. Breath reveals the  
person.” (Morgado-Valle)





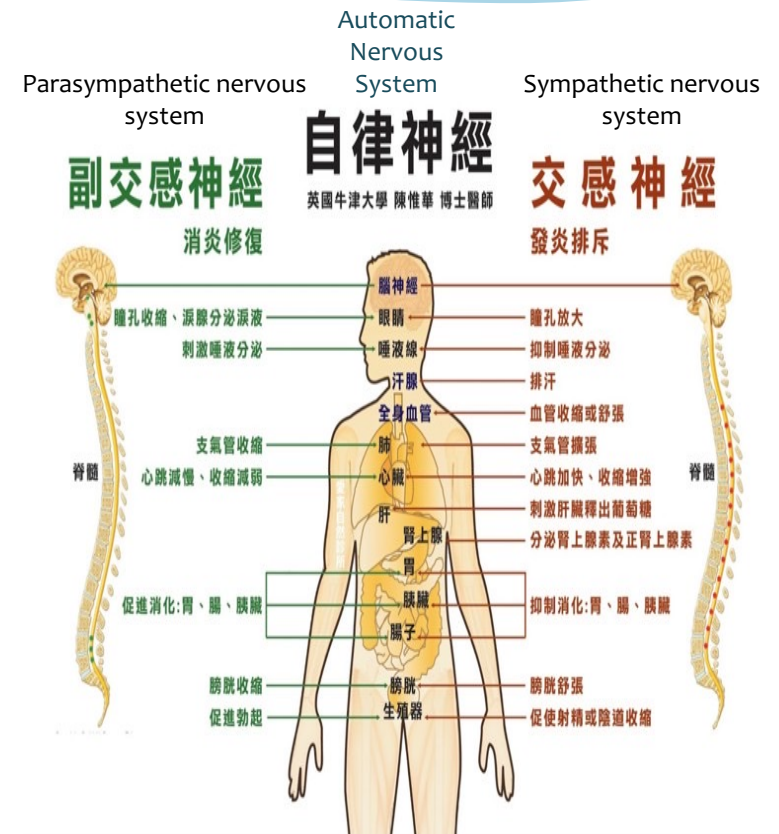
# Learning goals: Breathing

- \* How breathing can help to relax and help the nervous system back to balance to achieve the homeostasis of the internal environment?
- \* Scientific findings:
  - \* Autonomic nervous system functioning
  - \* Deep Breathing and Autonomic Nervous System
- \* Learn breathing practice
  - \* Breathe, relax, smile
  - \* Diaphragmatic/Abdominal breathing
  - \* Breathing with awareness



# How breathing can help to relax and help the nervous system back to balance to achieve the homeostasis of the internal environment?

- \* The **autonomic nervous system** is designed to maintain homeostasis – or balance – with the body's systems.
- \* Two main divisions of the nervous system are the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems.
- \* The **sympathetic nervous system** is about excitation, while the **parasympathetic nervous system** is concerned with relaxation.
- \* Breathing deeply, with a slow and steady inhalation-to-exhalation ratio, signals our parasympathetic nervous system to calm the body down.
- \* Long, deep breaths can also manage stress response to help decrease anxiety, fear, racing thoughts, a rapid heartbeat, and shallow chest breathing.



# Autonomic nervous system functioning

- \* The autonomic nervous system is a control system that acts unconsciously and regulates bodily functions, such as the heart rate, digestion, respiratory rate, pupillary response, urination, and sexual arousal. This system is the primary mechanism in control of the fight-or-flight response.
- \* Abnormalities in the autonomic and neuroendocrine responses typical of chronic stress appear to be a characteristic feature of the metabolic syndrome.

## Fight Or Flight

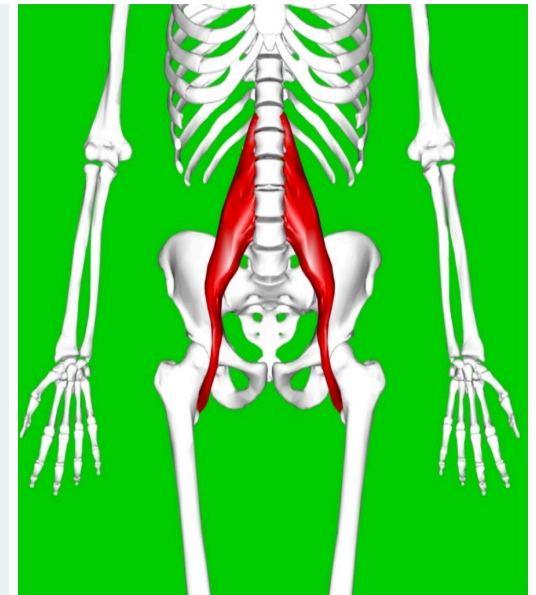
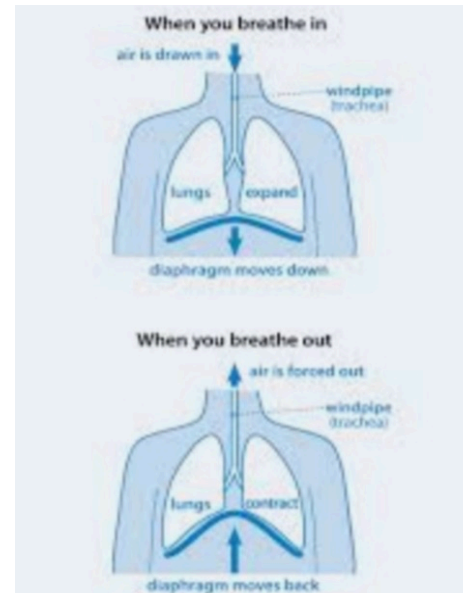
When we encounter something scary or dangerous our bodies try to be helpful by getting us ready to **fight** or **run away**.

This **fight-or-flight** reaction might make you feel strong feelings in your body and mind.



# Deep Breathing and Autonomic Nervous System

- \* The psoas and diaphragm work together with each breath to provide anterior spinal stability.
- \* The functions of the diaphragm affect the whole body system. The respiratory rhythm, directly and indirectly, affects the autonomic nervous system.
- \* The diaphragm and the psoas react to fear and stress with constriction. In “fight or flight” mode, the breath is short and sharp and becomes the psoas muscle.
- \* Diaphragmatic breathing provides several health benefits, including:
  - \* Strengthening the diaphragm
  - \* Improving stability in the core muscles
  - \* Slowing the breathing rate
  - \* Lowering heart rate and blood pressure
  - \* Reducing oxygen demand
  - \* Promoting relaxation

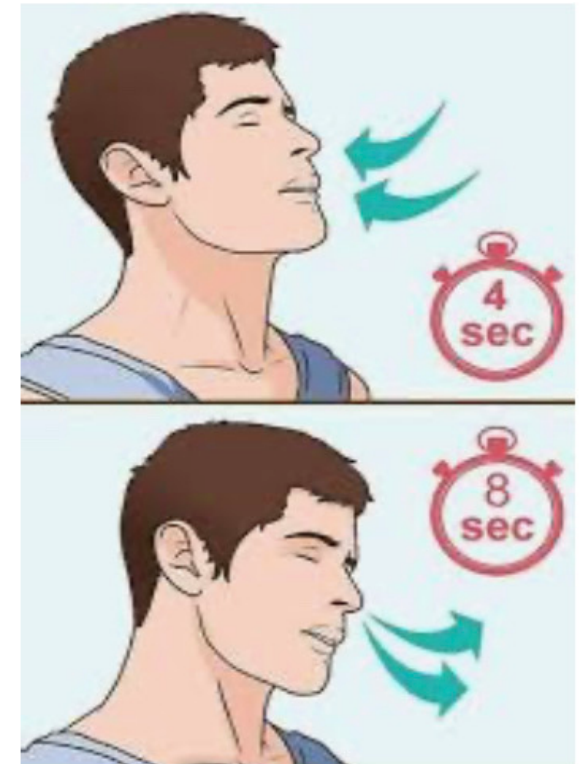


# Learn breathing practice:

**Breathe, Relax, Smile** - calmly attend to the natural flow of breath and go along with it, participating in its natural rhythm

(Mindfulness and  
Relaxation)

- Sitting in a dignified posture, head balanced on shoulders, arms, and hands resting comfortably.
- This is a time for allowing ourselves to switch from our normal mode of doing, moving, and reacting to one of **simply being**. Just being attentive to what's happening within your own awareness, right here and right now.
- And as you sit, **notice sensations of the breath**.  
Just notice how your abdomen moves on each in-breath and out-breath, the movement of air through your nostrils, a slight movement of chest and shoulders.
- Just bringing your awareness to whichever part of your breath cycle and wherever it is the most vivid, whether it be your tummy, your chest or your shoulders, or the movement of air through your nostrils...
- Noticing the entire cycle of breath, from the movement of the air coming in, filling the lungs, and extending the abdomen slightly, the movement of air going out, and being aware of the pause, the stopping point, in between the in-breath and the out-breath, and the out-breath and the next in-breath. It's all one movement, even through the changing of direction; notice where that pause is... see to what degree you can be aware of your whole cycle... recognize that each part of the cycle is different from the other part... and this time through may be different than the last time through. Each one is unique in its way if you pay attention.
- You'll notice your attention shifting away from your breath from time to time. The mind may wander into fantasies, memories, thoughts of the day, worries that you might have, and things you need to do... and **without giving yourself a hard time** when you notice that that's happened, **gently** but firmly bring your awareness back to the sensations of breathing... the actual physical sensations of the breath as it moves through your body.





# Learn breathing practice:

## Diaphragmatic/Abdominal breathing – increase the efficiency of the lungs and promote a feeling of calm or relaxation

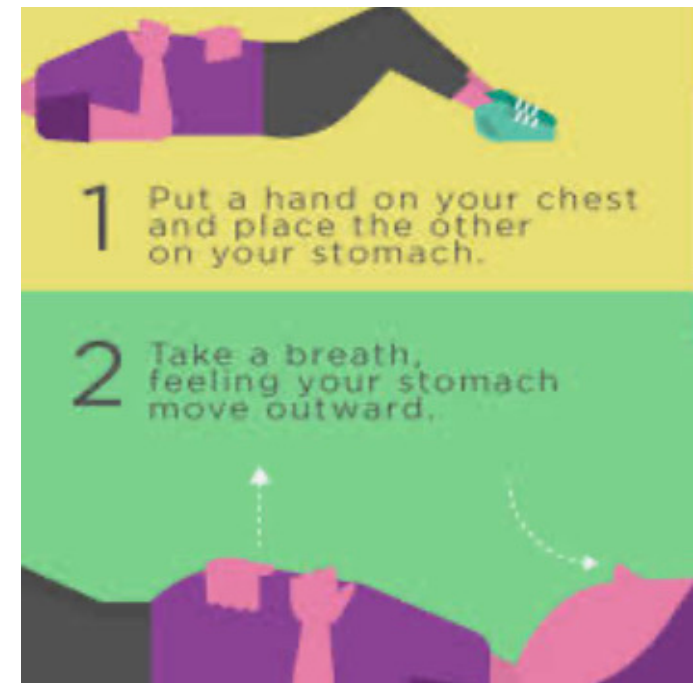
Relaxation

The diaphragm influences the body's metabolic balance. It stimulates the venous and lymphatic return, creating the correct relationship between the stomach and the esophagus to prevent gastroesophageal (stomach and esophagus) reflux. It is essential for correct posture, locomotion, and the movement of the upper limbs. The diaphragmatic muscle influences the emotional and psychological spheres. Inspiratory apnea can raise the somatic pain threshold, decreasing the pain perception. Breath focus helps one concentrate on slow, deep breathing and aids one in disengaging from distracting thoughts and sensations. It is especially helpful if you tend to hold in your stomach.

Diaphragmatic breathing reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol in the body. Because of this, it may help alleviate symptoms of stress and anxiety, Asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) – with symptoms of shortness of breath and fatigue.

Lie on a flat surface with a pillow under the head and pillows beneath the knees, Pillow will help keep the body in a comfortable position.

- Place one hand on the middle of the upper chest.
- Place the other hand on the stomach, beneath the rib cage, and above the diaphragm.
- To inhale, slowly breathe in through the nose, drawing the breath toward the stomach. The stomach should push upward against the hand while the chest remains still.
- To exhale, tighten the abdominal muscles and let the stomach fall downward while exhaling through pursed lips. Again, the chest should remain still.
- Practice for 5-10 minutes at a time, around three to four times each day.



# Learn breathing practice:

## Breathing with awareness

Mindfulness



# TITER SITTING

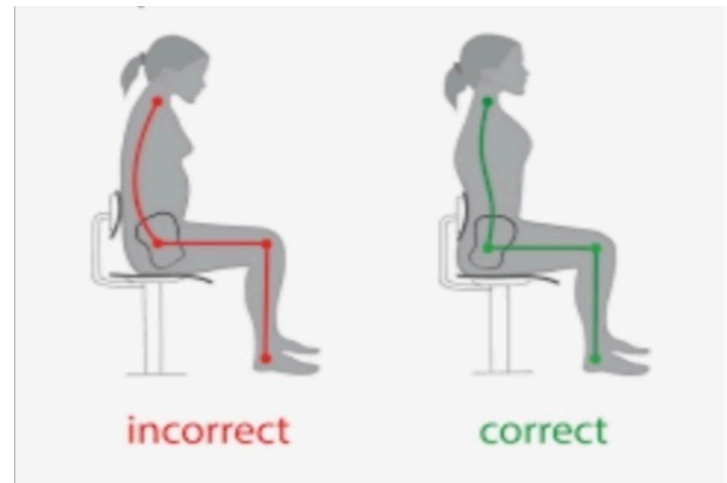
“I sit with my spine upright,  
but not rigid, and I relax all  
the muscles in my body.”  
(Thich Nhat Hanh)





# Learning goals: Sitting

- \* How sitting can elicit relaxation response to balance out the negative mental and physical effects of stress?
- \* Scientific findings:
  - \* Immune system work best when relaxed
- \* Learn sitting practice
  - \* Sitting upright, relax
  - \* Body scan – 4 lines relaxation
  - \* Sitting with awareness

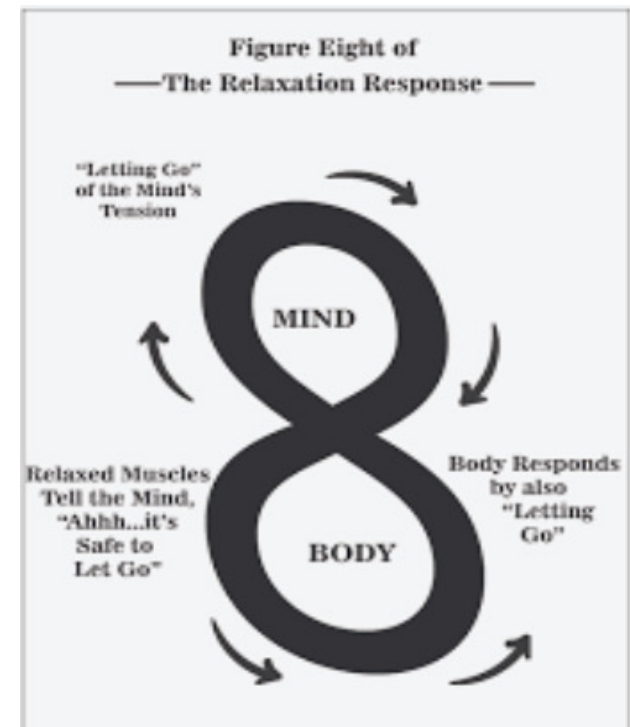


# How sitting can elicit relaxation response to balance out the negative mental and physical effects of stress?

Mind and body affect each other. The increase in depression and fatigue may be in part caused by sitting in a collapsed posture at work or at home. When an individual shifts from a collapsed, slouching body posture to an erect posture with one's head held high, a sense of subjective energy may significantly increase (Peper & Lin, 2012; Peper, 2012).

RR refers to the inborn capacity of the body to enter a special state characterized by lower heart rate, decreased breathing rate, lowered blood pressure, slower brain waves, and an overall reduction of the speed of metabolism. The changes produced by this response counteract the harmful and uncomfortable feelings of stress.

Elicitation of the RR is associated with coordinated biochemical changes, characterized by decreased oxygen consumption, carbon dioxide elimination, blood pressure, heart and respiratory rate, and norepinephrine responsivity, as well as increased heart rate variability and alterations in cortical and subcortical brain regions.



# Immune system work best when relaxed p.t.o.

Mindfulness

You can lighten your mood and allow yourself to be empowered and hopeful when you shift your posture. It is okay to acknowledge the feeling when feeling down and say, “**At this moment**, I am feeling overwhelmed, and I’m not sure what to do.” When your energy is low, again acknowledge this to yourself: “At this moment, I feel exhausted,” or “At this moment, I feel tired,” or whatever phrase fits the feeling. As you acknowledge it, state “at this moment.” The phrase “at this moment” is correct and accurate. It implies what is occurring without a self-suggestion that the feeling will continue, which helps to avoid the idea that this was, is, and will always be. The reality is that whatever we are experiencing is always limited to this moment, as no one knows what will occur in the future. This **leaves the future open to change and new possibilities.**

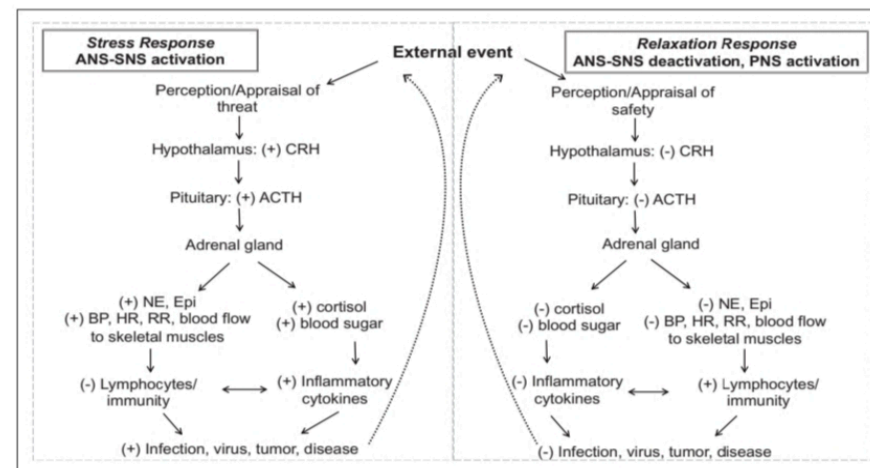


# Immune system work best when relaxed

Relaxation

- \* In addition to the psychological effects of relieving stress and mental tension, deep relaxation, if practiced regularly, can strengthen the immune system and produce a host of other valuable physiological changes.
- \* Research shows that relaxation may help ward off disease by making people less susceptible to viruses and *lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels*.
- \* In asthmatics, relaxation training has been found to *widen restricted respiratory passages*. In some diabetics, relaxation can *reduce the need for insulin*. The training has brought about significant relief in many patients with chronic, unbearable pain.

## Stress Response and Relaxation Response



**Figure 1.** Overview of the physiology of the stress response and relaxation response. ACTH, adrenocorticotropic hormone; ANS, autonomic nervous system; BP, blood pressure; CRH, corticotrophin-releasing hormone; HR, heart rate; NE, norepinephrine; PNS, parasympathetic nervous system; RR, relaxation response; SNS, sympathetic nervous system.

# Learn sitting practice: Sitting Upright, Relax

Mindfulness and  
Relaxation

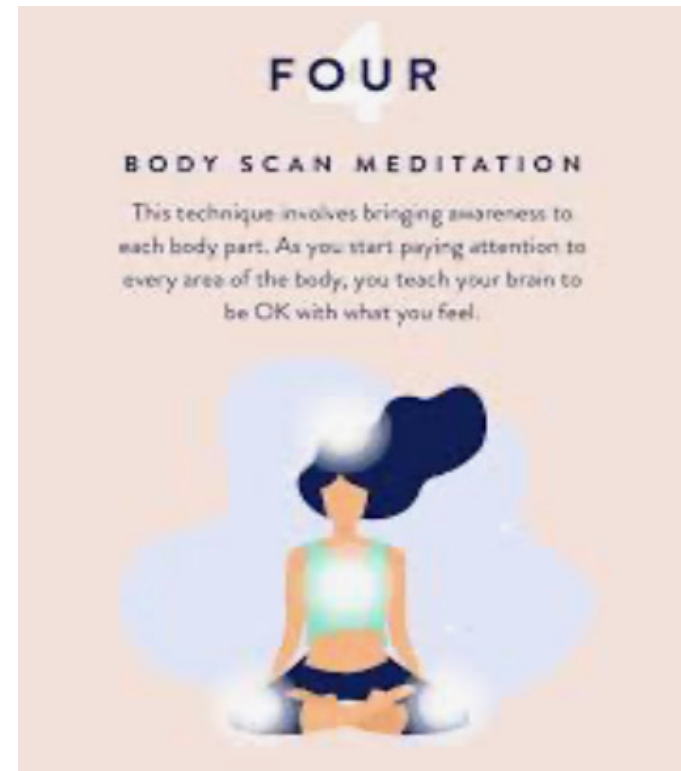
- \* Good sitting posture is really important for meditation, but that doesn't have to mean sitting on the floor and turning yourself into a human pretzel in a cross-legged pose.
- \* Unless you've done a lot of yoga, or you've grown up practicing meditation in a cross-legged seated or lotus position, and you're comfortable with it, we recommend sitting in an upright chair with your legs uncrossed, feet on the floor, and your arms and hands resting either on the legs or in the lap.
- \* Try not to lean against the back of the chair. Scooch to the middle of the chair, and, if it helps, place a cushion or folded blanket under your sitting bones to tilt your hips forward. You can also put a pillow behind your lower back for support to help keep your back naturally straight (not arched or hunched) and your head and neck aligned with your spine. The idea is to set yourself up so you're alert, yet maintaining your posture feels effortless.



# Learn sitting practice: Body Scan – 4 Lines Relaxation

Relaxation

RR body scan meditation explicitly emphasizes physical relaxation during the practice



# Learn sitting practice: Sitting with Awareness

Mindfulness

Meditate on breathing and scanning sensations throughout the body with emphasizes on mindful awareness and no explicit relaxation instructions



1 Set aside a time and place in your day where you can sit comfortably and you won't be distracted or disturbed.

2 Find a comfortable but attentive seated position, close your eyes, and bring your attention to your toes.

3 Working up from your toes, bring awareness to each body part in turn: your feet, ankles, calves, knees, etc. up to your head.

**Health Benefits:**

- Reduced stress
- Decreased muscle tension
- Increased pain tolerance

**Why it works to reduce stress:**

Body scan meditations encourage self-awareness of sensations we might otherwise be ignoring.



# TITER STANDING

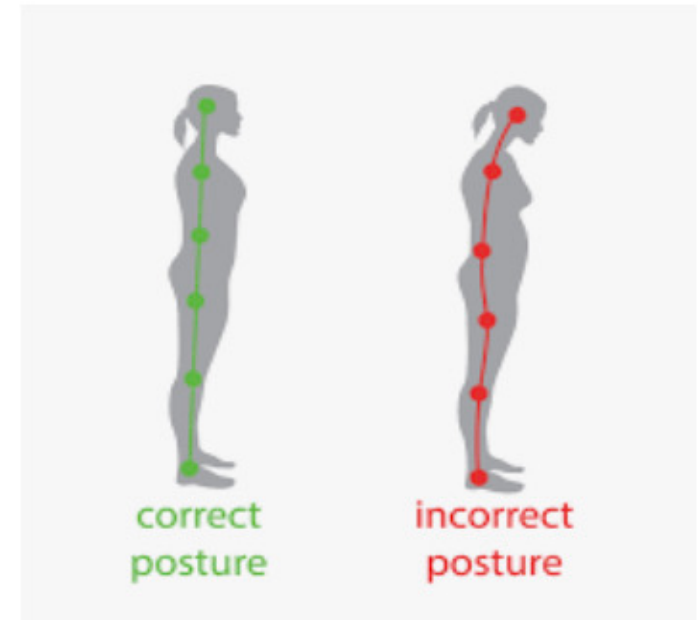
“Standing alone and unchanging, one can observe every mystery. Present at every moment and ceaselessly continuing, this is the gateway to indescribable marvels.” (Tao Te Ching)





# Learning goals: Standing

- \* How standing can release long held stress and deep tension, with the legs, spine and shoulders become strong yet relaxed?
- \* Scientific findings:
  - \* How mere standing can improve balance, strength, immune function and wellbeing?
- \* Learn standing practice
  - \* Standing upright, relax
  - \* Energy boosting standing
  - \* Standing with awareness



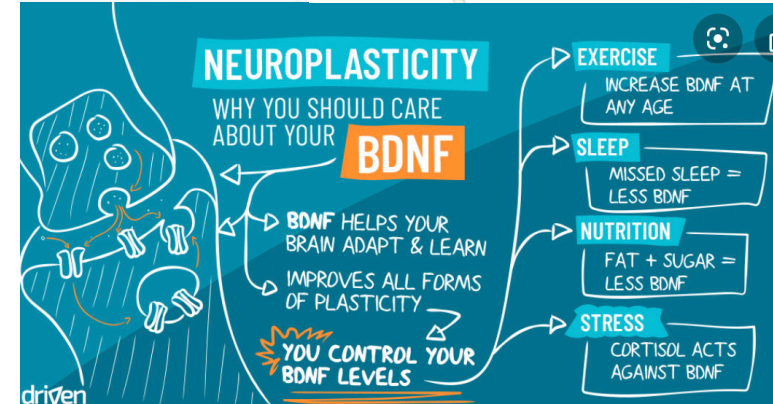
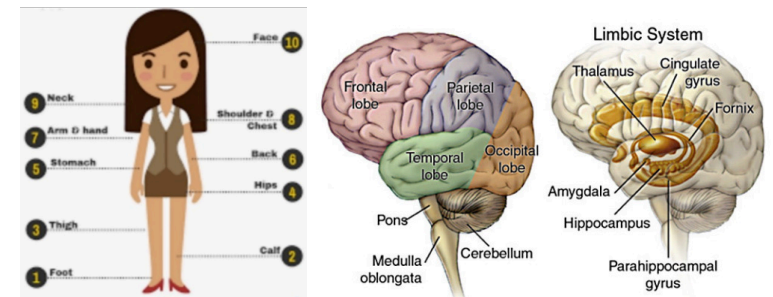
# How standing can release long held stress and deep tension, with the legs, spine and shoulders become strong yet relaxed?

## Stand Up To Stress:

Standing meditation, a kind of meditative movement (MM), improves core strength, balance bone density, power, awareness, sleep quality, body alignment, the efficiency of movements, and the mind-body connection.

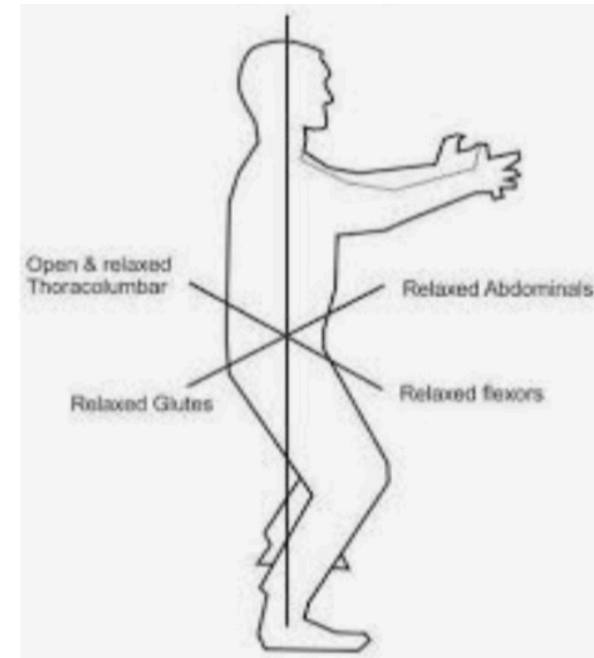
## Neurobiological explanations:

- Increase brain levels of monoamine neurotransmitters, as has been claimed for selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs);
- Reduce limbic activation of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, thus reducing plasma cortisol and adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) and possibly lessening depression;
- Up-regulate brain-derived neurogenesis factor (BDNF) and increase neurogenesis. MM produced both short-term and long-term increases in melatonin levels, and melatonin may protect the brain against inflammation and promote neurogenesis.



# How mere standing can improve balance, strength, immune function and wellbeing?

- \* Meditative standing still can energize and realign more than physical exercise, which increases the protein of red blood cells, providing an increased flow of oxygen to different organs and allowing the whole body to feel relaxed.
- \* Meditative Standing: Stand comfortably with your feet hip-to-shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent (not locked), and hips and spine relaxed. Gently raise your arms to mid-chest height as if you were holding a large beach ball in front of you with your hands relaxed and fingers lightly extended. Imagine a piece of string suspending your head. Breathe normally, preferably through the nose. Feel and observe the body and mind, encouraging the whole body to soften without letting the posture collapse or become rigid or tense. Hold for 2 to 3 minutes, gradually building up to 10 to 15 minutes a day.



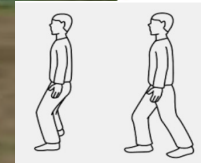
# Learn standing practice:

## Standing Upright, Relax

Relaxation

The whole point of meditation practice is to learn to bring the quality of relaxation into our daily life.

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Position your feet so your heels are slightly closer together than your big toes. Don't lock your knees; a soft bend in them is fine. Place your hands over your belly, right hand over left, to feel the breath moving through your body.

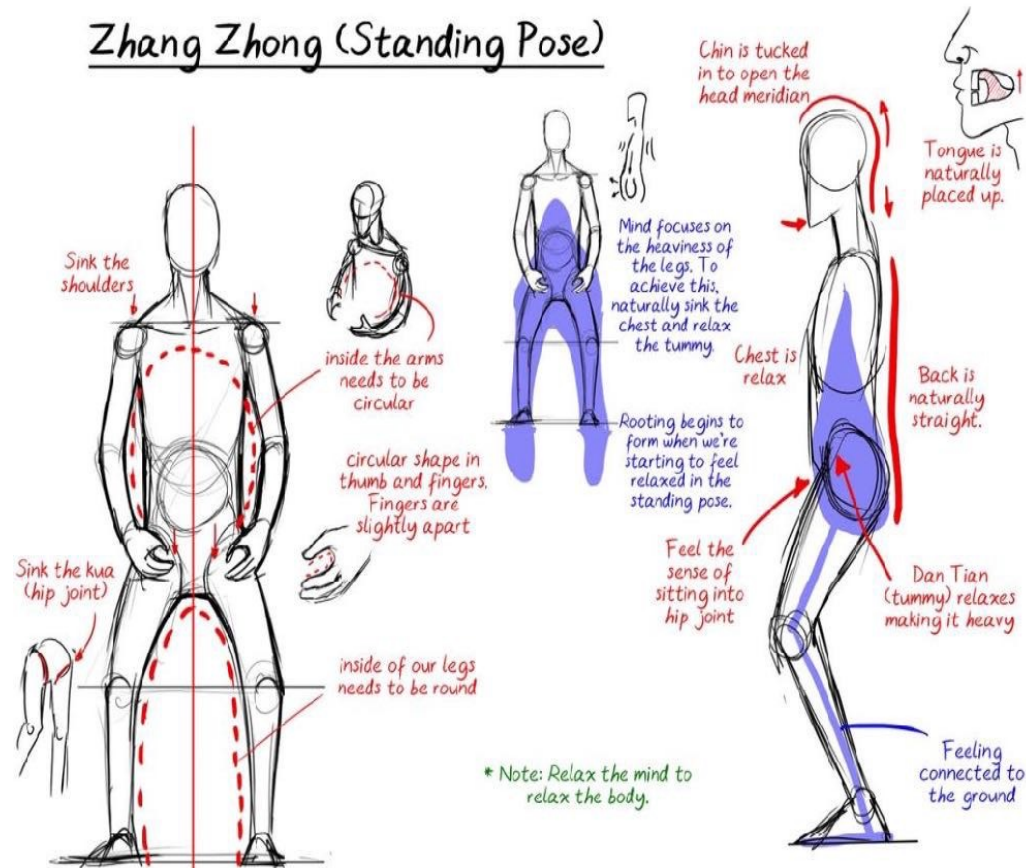


# Learn standing practice: Energy Boosting Standing

Relaxation

One of the fundamental training methods of Chinese martial arts. Practitioners hold standing postures to cultivate mental and physical relaxation, tranquility, awareness, and power.

## Zhang Zhong (Standing Pose)





# Learn standing practice:

## Standing with Awareness

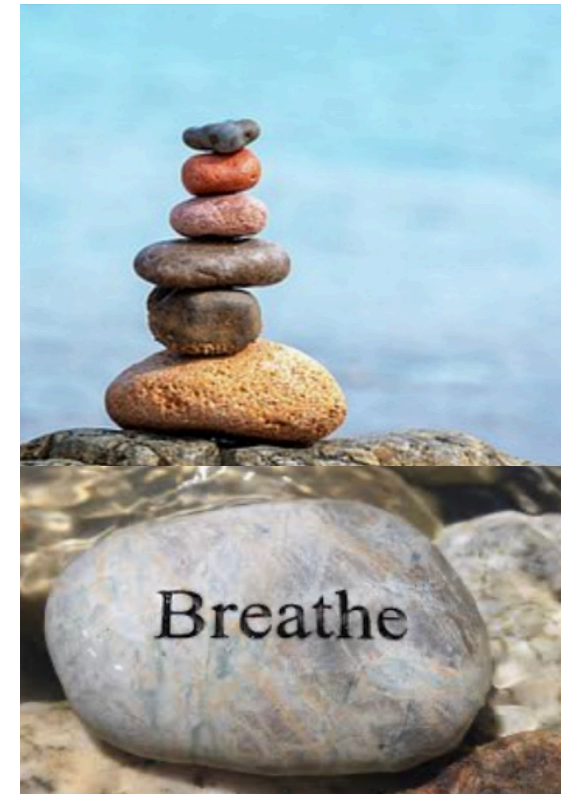
Mindfulness

Standing in the mountain pose: Let's begin by standing with your feet directly under your hips, feeling as much of the soles of the feet as possible...aware of your toes, the heels, and the solid support of the floor. And moving awareness up through the body, bringing a gentle lift through the arches, the ankles, and the lower legs, knees, upper legs, and up through the spine, shoulders at ease, the chest is open... head, neck, and back aligned, if that is possible for you... the head balanced on the neck and shoulders, arms alongside the body... Experiencing a sense of presence and elevation, just like a mountain.

Be aware of your breathing, and bring awareness to your feet' soles. Notice the support and connection with the floor at this moment. Shift the body's weight to the right leg and, on an inhalation, release the muscles of the left foot... and, exhaling, place the weight back, heel first. And shift the body's weight to the left leg, and inhaling, release the muscles of the right foot...and exhaling, place the weight back, heel first. And continue to do this, inhaling—releasing; exhaling—placing.

Next, expand your awareness to include sensations in the legs for a few moments, and lastly, expand the field of awareness even wider to include the whole body. Notice sensations in your entire body. And if you notice that your mind has been caught in a story, that it is in a blaming, judging mode, notice that and gently direct your attention back to feeling sensations in your entire body...

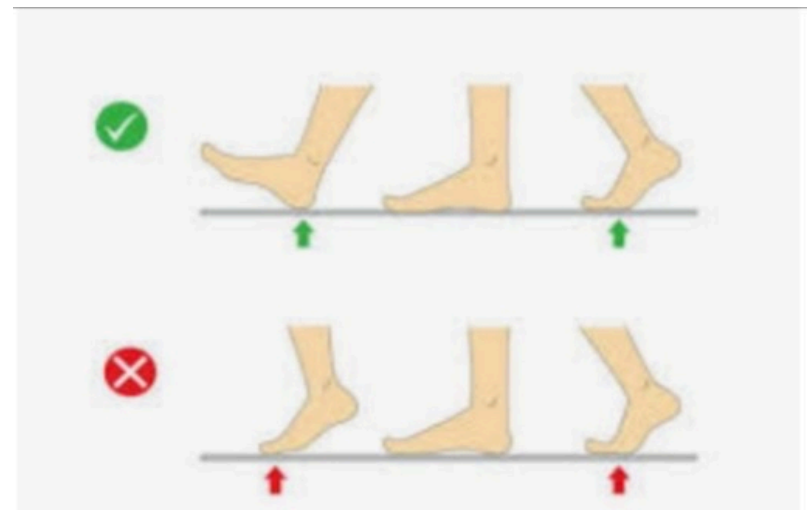
Now coming to an ending... Lower your eyes and notice how your body feels. What are the thoughts and emotions present at this moment?





# Learning goals: Walking

- \* How walking can help to employ psoas successfully to heal persistent pain and injured muscle
- \* Scientific findings:
  - \* The relationship of the autonomic nervous system and the psoas - the muscle of back pain, hip pain, groin pain
- \* Learn walking practice
  - \* The happy foot fall
  - \* Employ psoas in walking
  - \* Walking with awareness





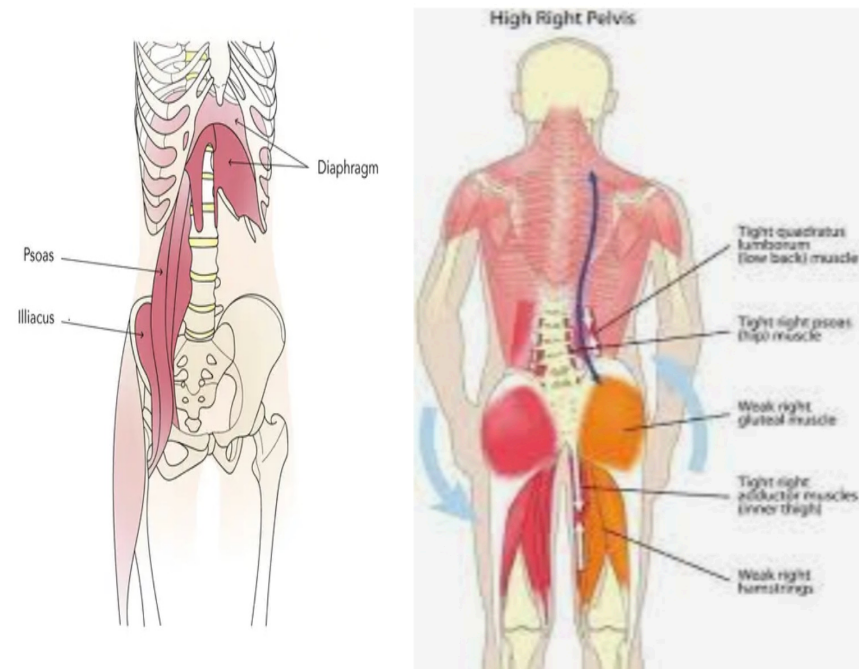
# How walking can help to employ psoas successfully to heal persistent pain and injured muscle

What does a strained psoas muscle feel like?

A 1985 paper in the British Medical Journal describes the classic symptoms of an **iliopsoas injury**: pain deep in the abdomen or upper groin area, tenderness when pushing on the muscle or tendon with your hands, and pain when you attempt to flex your hip against resistance.

The function of the **psoas muscle** is to connect the upper body to the lower body, the outside to the inside, the appendicular to the axial skeleton, and the front to the back, with its facial relationship. Combined with the **iliopsoas muscle**, the psoas majorly contributes to hip joint flexion.

Psoas is the walking muscle, every successful step we take is initiated by the psoas helping the back leg to move forward. Steps initiated with the quadriceps and adductors tend to move through the outside of the foot, which minimizes the ability of the psoas to help with walking. Every step we take wants to end through the inner foot on the mound of the big toe. The big toe corresponds to the inner upper thigh and the psoas. When a step is completed successfully, the psoas of the back leg is activated through this inner foot/inner thigh connection. This successful movement through the back leg stabilizes that side of the body and spine as the opposite leg and **psoas are released to come forward**.

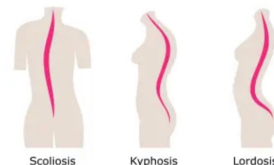
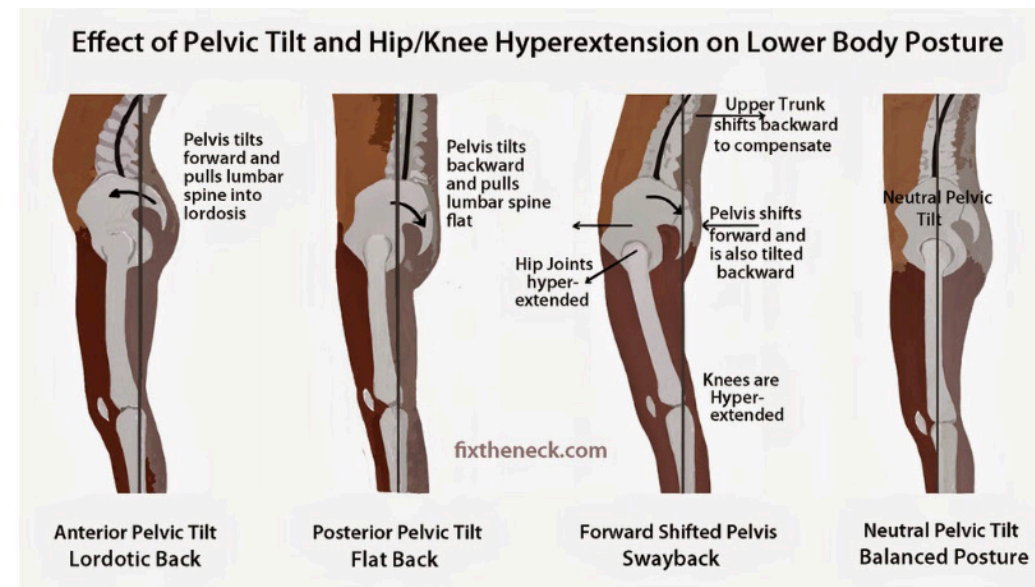


# The relationship of the autonomic nervous system and the psoas

The sympathetic nervous system is related to both our fight-or-flight response. And flexion is an instinct of fight or flight with the psoas – the main hip flexor – involved in every reaction. When we are afraid too often or feel continuously unsafe, or suffer from a blunt force trauma that is too much to bear in the moment, we get stuck in the sympathetic nervous system and can't let go.

When we take on too much – whether emotionally or from incidents like car accidents, the psoas becomes the warehouse for the unprocessed energy that stays in the body until we create the right environment to let it go. This is why the psoas is the muscle of the back, hip, groin, and other pain.

A tight psoas muscle will cause a multitude of problems such as **chronic back pain, poor posture, bloating** (a tight psoas muscle stretches over the lower abdomen, causing pressure on that area which can result in bloating and abdominal pain), **constipation, functional leg length discrepancy, leg rotation, sciatica, an obtunded abdomen**, and can affect the drainage of lymph.



# Learn walking practice: The Happy Foot Fall

Mindfulness and  
Relaxation

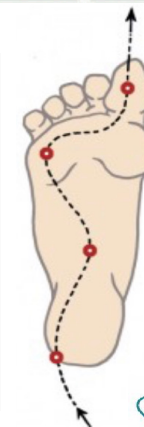
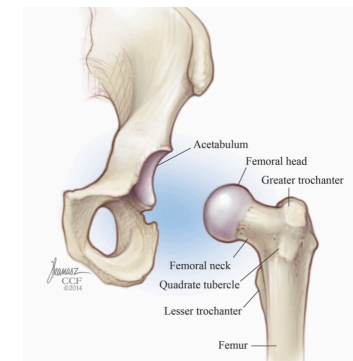
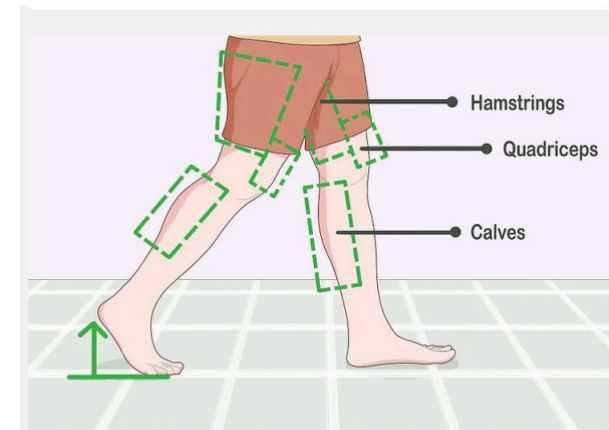
Your stride should be longer behind your body, where your toe is pushing off, rather than out in front of your body. This is because your forward leg has no power, while your back leg pushes you forward. You want to get the full power out of the push from the back leg, with the foot rolling through the step from heel to toe.

## The Foot Fall

Ideally, calluses should be formed by the three arches. The foot's main weight-bearing occurs in these three points, emphasizing the big toe. In a happy foot, the fall should encompass all three points, rolling from the outer heel to the inner foot and finishing on the big toe before launching into the next step. Finishing on the big toe creates a reciprocal response in the inner upper thigh. The inner spiral of the leg sets the psoas back at its base, providing the magical lift in the spine that elevates us energetically.

## Practice Your Stride

Practice a correct walking stride by consciously keeping your rear foot on the ground longer with each step and giving a good push-off. If you do this, you will naturally place your forward foot closer to your body. This will retrain you away from overstriding. While it may feel strange at first, as you get into a rhythm, you will feel the power you get from the rear foot.

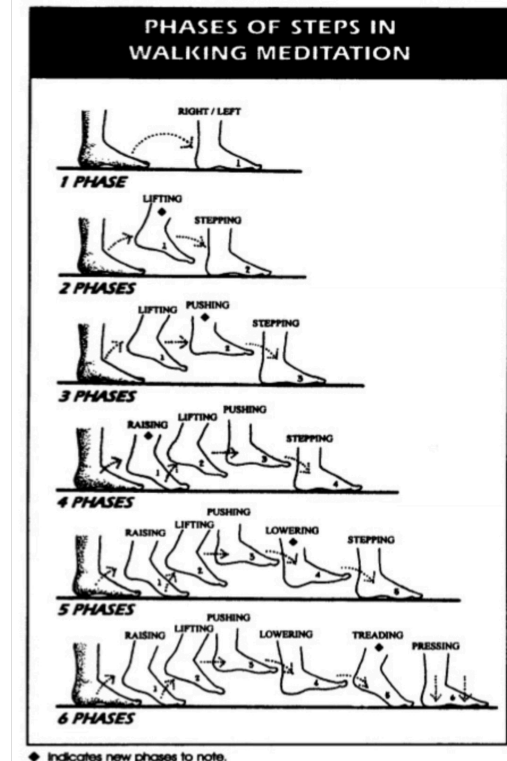


# Learn walking practice:

Employ psoas in walking that provide the magical lift when the spine elevates energetically

Relaxation

Psoas attaches at the back of the inner thigh, and pressing down on the inner foot accesses the muscles of the inner thighs. (press on the pinky toe side of the foot the outer leg engages, and press on the mound of the big toe the inner thigh engages.) Pressing down on the mound of the big toe engages the inner upper thigh muscles, which set the psoas back, engaging it to pull the bones of the lumbar spine forward and down. When they pull down, a reciprocal action extends the spinal muscles up against the lumbar bones moving down (reciprocal inhibition). The spinal muscles run from the bottom of the spine to the occiput or base of the skull. So when the psoas is working well, it helps the spine elevate successfully.





# Learn walking practice: Walking with Awareness

Mindfulness

- \* The skeletal proprioceptive system organizes and rights your body in relationship to the earth's magnetic field. There are a multitude of receptors throughout the body, with major reflexes located in the bottoms of the feet, sacroiliac ligaments, and the head/neck. Visual control can override the reflexes. For example, when walking up or down stairs, people commonly walk with their eyes focused down. Using sight rather than sensation to confirm where they are going, walking with the head and eyes locked down interferes with coordination and ease of movement. When off balance, the iliopsoas will be engaged to help maintain skeletal support.
- \* If you constantly keep your eyes and head facing down towards the ground while walking, you override this subtle reflex and stress the system. Keeping the head up and the eyes oriented towards the horizon helps the nerves fire accurate information and frees the skeletal system to find its relationship to the earth's surface.
- \* Releasing a chronically constricted iliopsoas muscle helps to switch the body from the sympathetic (flee or fight) nervous system to the life-affirming parasympathetic one, whose focus is replenishing, building, and strengthening. Part of the immune system and associated with hormonal balance, adrenal health greatly benefits from a healthy, supple iliopsoas. Because the iliopsoas is part of the body's natural fear reflex system, releasing all unnecessary tension in the iliopsoas muscle awakens a deep instinctual sensitivity.



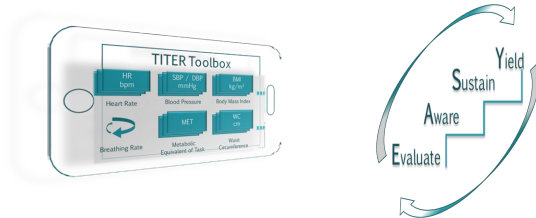
A serene landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding environment. In the background, there are misty, rolling mountains and a dense forest of evergreen trees. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and ethereal, with a soft, hazy light. The text "a state of being" is centered in the middle of the image in a purple font.

a state of being

*Mindfulness In Biz*  
正念事業

# TITER: Take-IT-Easy, Relax~

- \* The TITER introduces the EASY approach in relaxation practice. It aims to support practitioners in developing their well-being program for stress adaption and building the practices into healthy habits:
  - \* Evaluate the well-being status periodically
  - \* Aware of the TITER components to build and adjust an effective well-being program
  - \* Sustain TITER's well-being by making it a healthy habit
  - \* Yield from TITER experience and sharing



- \* The TITER Steps can bring the following to practitioners:
  - \* Calm the vibrant mind in gentle breathing
  - \* Ease the body from tension through sitting
  - \* Energise body cells through standing and walking
  - \* Easy to practice and blend in everyday life that brings fast results and sustainability



# Creating a Routine

Each time you collapse or have negative thoughts, change your position to a more erect position. It only takes two minutes of posture change to initiate changes in your hormones, energy levels, strength, and moods. These two-minute changes done often may change your life. Instruct yourself to get up and move about frequently to prevent low energy and depression.

Try different TITER Steps to see which one works best for you –

- \* “You need to use a relaxation technique that will break the train of everyday thought and decrease the activity of the sympathetic nervous system.” (Dr. Benson H, relaxation response)
- \* If the favorite TITER Step fails to engage you, or wants some variety, try all the other alternatives in practice.

The following tips will be helpful:

- \* Choose a special place where one can sit or stand comfortably and quietly.
- \* Don't try too hard. That may cause one to tense up.
- \* Don't be too passive, either. The key to eliciting the relaxation response lies in shifting one's focus from stressors to deeper, calmer rhythms – and having a focal point is essential.
- \* Try to practice once or twice a day, always simultaneously, to enhance the sense of ritual and establish a habit.
- \* Try to practice at least 20-30 minutes each day.







a Quiet moment

MIB TITER

Take-IT-Easy,Relax~  
Wellness Program

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