

The Art of Breathing - online course

Welcome to this 10-weeks course where we'll explore the breath, how it affects us on different levels and learn the most common yogic breathing techniques – pranayama techniques. The course is created by Yogobe in collaboration with Ulrica Norberg, yoga teacher, yogiraj and author. The purpose of the course is for you to deepen your awareness, strengthen your breathing mechanism, to increase the ability to unwind tension and to learn how to mobilize energy towards special needs. Pranayama also connects you with your spirit, can help to boost creativity and balance the mind. This practice is a great complement to any physical training or exercise.

“Your breath is your superpower. It governs all that is you. It literally holds your life in its strings. Your breath is the bridge between your conscious and unconscious self.” – Ulrica Norberg

The breath

Breathing is something we do on a daily basis. The body, in a living state, breathes involuntarily whether we are awake, sleeping, or actively exercising. Breathing is living. It is a vital function of life. In yoga, we refer to this as pranayama. Prana is a sanskrit word that means life force and ayama means extending or stretching. Thus, the word “pranayama” translates to the control of life force. It is also known as the extension of breath. Every cell in our bodies needs oxygen to function properly. So it's no surprise that research shows that a regular practice of controlled breathing can decrease the effects of stress on the body and increase overall physical and mental health.

Pranayama

Pranayama is a form of breath gym. It is where you go when you want to condition yourself from the inside. In relation to asana practice if you are a yogi, it will enhance the effects of your physical practice. If you exercise, you will not only perform better in whatever sport or fitness regime you have, it will give you greater focus, concentration and body awareness. You will notice how much better you sleep at night, that your posture has improved and that you are less stressed. Pranayama is a bridge between you and anything. For those of you who meditate, this is the path to help you quiet those disturbing thought and emotional patterns. Learn more about pranayama and its benefits in "Ulricas words about the course" below.

Who is this course for?

The pranayama course is for dedicated students and teachers who aspire to merge deeper into the art of breathing and pranayama.

An overview of the content

- 18 theoretical lectures.
- 9 pranayama techniques with introduction and practice.
- 2 pre-pranayama yoga classes.
- Text documents on topics in the course.
- Text documents for yoga teachers to each pranayama technique.

Course layout

Every week we build ourselves stronger through the art and practice of pranayama. We move from gross to subtle, week by week, first setting the foundation and building from there. Ulrica guides you through your journey, giving you some extra material to boost your pranayama practice with content and technical advice. Each seven-day period you work with 1-2 techniques daily, always followed by some short asana practice to get in your body, and always with 5-10 minutes Savasana at the end in order to settle the energies to gain from the practice. The goal is a daily practice, to really discover the benefits from the techniques.

- **Introduction**
Get to know the course as well as the breath. Ulrica gives lectures on why the breath is so important and gives you the basics of breathing.
- **Week 1: Breath**
In the first week of the course you'll practice the Full complete breath. You will get the first pep-talk of the course, for this first segment, and also the first of two pre-pranayama yoga classes, that you'll be practicing the first seven weeks. This week's lecture is on the topic breath and the nervous system.
- **Week 2: Moving on**
The technique of the second week is Padadirsasana. Ulrica also talks about how the breath affects the body.
- **Week 3: Flow**

It's time to learn the technique the Pendulum. Lectures of this week are about breath and the mind.

- **Week 4: High & Low**

During the fourth week you'll learn two different techniques, Brahmari and Sitali. Ulrica also talks about the breath and the soul.

- **Week 5: Energize**

This week's technique is Ujjayi pranayama. This week there is no lecture, but you can check out "Lectures & Inspiration" at any time during the course.

- **Week 6: Individualize**

This week you'll get an overall introduction to alternative nostril breathing. The first of these techniques is Nadi shodana, which will be this week's focus.

- **Week 7: Dim or brighten**

The two final techniques also belongs to the family of alternative nostril breathing, Chandra bhedana and Surya bhedana.

- **Week 8 & 9: Weekly practice**

To get the most out of the breath we need some tools and techniques. In this segment you'll get to fill your toolbox with different pranayama techniques that all has their own unique qualities. The first part includes a pre-pranayama practice with asanas, physical poses, that helps your body get the most out of the techniques. The other parts each includes introduction and practice for the different techniques.

- **Week 10: Setting up your own practice**

In the final segment it is time to start using the tools in your toolbox to build your own pranayama practice. This segment includes setups that will help you on your way along with one more pre-pranayama class.

The practice

It's always better to aim for a few minutes every day rather than a longer practice a few times a week when it comes to yoga and meditation, this goes for the pranayama practice as well. It can be hard to find time for the practice every single day, that's ok. Try to practice the breathing exercises at least five days per week, and if you manage to get the practice in seven days per week, that will be a great bonus.

Access to the course

You have access to the course for one year from the day you purchase it.

Ulricas words about the course

Your life, your breath

Welcome to this course on the art of breathing. I designed this format together with Yogobe in order to offer a comprehensive immersion in the one topic that is most dear to me. THE BREATH.

In this course I focus a lot on how to begin a more individually based Pranayama practice, set according to your needs, season and what is in the present moment. Our days are different. We feel different. You might have an important meeting coming up that you wish to prepare yourself fully for. Or you have set your mind on a running race in a couple of months or you plan on getting pregnant or are already.

It is my intention that you after the duration of these upcoming weeks, have reached a higher state of balance, less stress in body and mind, developed skillfulness in the way you breathe more fully and that you have begun a regular breathing practice.

Your breath is your superpower. It governs all that is you. It literally holds your life in its strings. Your breath is the bridge between your conscious and unconscious self.

Reduction of stress through breath

Daily stressors, tensions and physical habits can create physical and energetic obstacles in our bodies. Without even noticing it our breathing can become gradually more shallow or stilted, we develop unconscious breathing patterns restricting the flow of breath and prana. Pranayama is a form of reducing tension in the breath, you can say freeing the breath from tension. We are also working on letting the life energy flow more freely through the body. It has the effect of energizing, relaxing and healing the body at the same time, letting everything fall into place more naturally. Our body is designed to rebalance itself. Only if we give it space, time and opportunity. Literally it is an increase and balance of life energy in your system.

About pranayama

Pranayama techniques focus on one or more of the four parts of the breath:

1. Inhalation (puraka)
2. Internal retention (antara-khumbaka)
3. Exhalation (rechaka)
4. External retention (bahya-khumbaka)

The exhalation is said to be the most important part of the breath - only when we can exhale and empty fully can we take a full new inhalation. We decompress and let toxins out first in order to fully charge and take in new oxygen. A regular pranayama practice can stimulate the parasympathetic system, countering the overstimulation our bodies go through during the Fight or Flight response. On a physical level by using pranayama techniques we can utilise and strengthen the whole range of our respiratory organs. We explore the lower, middle and upper parts of the breath and regulate the inhalation, retention and exhalation of the breath. Our breathing patterns are closely linked to our emotional states. We breathe differently when we are angry, excited, tired or when we are nervous. Yet, it works the other way too. We can calm or energize ourselves by changing our breathing patterns. Even by just taking time out to consciously become more aware of our breath we can help to start to alter our emotions. Through a regular and sustained practice of pranayama you can supercharge your whole body.

A rewarding journey

It is my great hope you will find enough resources material to set sail on to what I think will be a much rewarding journey ahead. I can only speak for myself, but my pranayama practice is why I do all the things I do, why I am hardly ever ill, I don't have any pains in my body, I can focus very easily, I am quite creative and I am not restless or anxious. This practice has helped me to tap in to my inner source and I nurture it everyday. It is like I can continuously be in dialogue with my inner beacon of life, it always flickering as long as I condition it 15 minutes a day. That is how much I spend on pure breathing techniques daily. First I do about 30 minutes asana, then 15 minutes breathing and 20 minutes meditation and then 10 minutes resting. That is what my practice looks like.

Let's begin. One breath at a time.

LOTS OF LOVE
HARI OM;

Ulrica

Photo in introduction video: Andreas Lundberg