

## Breathing Techniques for Older Elementary

### Bellows Breath (Sanskrit: Bhastrika)

**Direct Aim:** To energize and invigorate the body. To connect the mind and body; to invigorate the central nervous system thereby invigorating both the mind and body.

**Indirect Aim:** To achieve, maintain, and preserve health and prevent disease in both mind and body.

#### Procedure:

1. Start by practicing Deep Belly Breathing for several breaths.
2. After doing several Deep Belly Breaths exhale fully, breathe in fully and then forcefully exhale through your nostrils using your diaphragm.
3. Exhale and inhale forcefully and deeply through your nose at the rate of about one second per cycle.
4. Remember to only use the diaphragm and keep your head, neck, shoulders and chest as stable as possible as the belly moves in and out.
5. Do a set of 10 breaths followed with normal breathing while noticing how your body feels.

#### Notes:

Do not perform Bellows Breath before going to bed as this breath may stop you from falling asleep.

If you are feeling sluggish or lethargic during the day, several rounds of Bellows Breath will help energize.

As this breath involves forceful exhalations and inhalations, it is important that you stop practicing the breath if you feel dizzy or light-headed.

If students find this breath too challenging they may do the Pursed Lips Breathing technique instead.

#### Extensions:

The Bellows Breath practice can be done by increasing the number of breaths at a time. Start by doing a round of 10 Bellow Breaths, then wait for about 15 seconds breathing normally – notice how you feel. As long as you are feeling fine, continue with a second round of Bellows Breaths with 20 breaths – notice how you feel. Again, as long as you are feeling fine, continue with a third round of Bellow Breaths with 30 breaths. If at any

time you feel dizzy or light-headed stop doing the Bellows Breaths. After the third round notice the sensations in your body.

### **Pursed Lips Breathing – an easier and less impactful alternative to Bellows Breath**

#### **Procedure:**

1. Start by practicing Deep Belly Breathing for several breaths.
2. After doing several Deep Belly Breaths exhale fully, breathe in fully through your nose and then forcefully exhale through pursed lips using your diaphragm.
3. Continue to exhale and inhale forcefully and deeply through your mouth using your diaphragm.
4. Remember to only use the diaphragm and keep your head, neck, shoulders and chest as stable as possible as the belly moves in and out.
5. Do a set of 10 breaths followed with normal breathing while noticing how your body feels.

#### **Older Elementary:**

Older Elementary need to follow a teacher for this experience and it is best for the students to only do 10 Bellows Breaths at a time.