

Inner Strength - Outer Strength

OUTER STRENGTH TIPS

Breath

“Breath is the source of life, the link between mind and body,” says Neelam Khatri, our resident yoga instructor and wellness manager at Mandarin Oriental Bangkok. “It’s a tool that’s available to us any time anywhere to release stress from the mind and the body. Just regulating our breath for few minutes every day can have an instant positive impact on our well- being.”

While breathwork has been around for centuries it is only just beginning to be seen as an important aspect of wellness and fitness training. The benefits of breathing exercises has been acknowledged during the Covid-19 pandemic as the virus predominately attacks the respiratory system and seems to have the most adverse impact on people whose respiratory system is not functioning optimally.

In yogic practices, the breath is referred to “prana” and is believed to connect the mind and the body. “When prana is balanced, the body and mind function well and are coordinated,” says Sky Arya, a yoga specialist from the Landmark Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong. “The manifestations of healthy prana are clarity of thoughts, perception and consciousness.”

How to improve your breathing technique:

- Take time to focus on your breathing.
- Practice “abdominal breathing” or “horizontal breathing” techniques, which encourage people to fill the lungs from the bottom up.
- Regularly practice taking deep full breaths to fully stretch and engage the respiratory system.
- Participate regularly in aerobic cardiovascular exercise.
- Work with a breathwork coach or teacher who can give you specific methods and training for improving your breathing.

Interesting reading:

- *The Wim Hof Method* by Wim Hof
- *Breath: The New Science of a Lost Art* by James Nestor
- *The Oxygen Advantage: The Simple, Scientifically Proven Breathing Techniques for a Healthier, Slimmer, Faster, and Fitter You* by Patrick G. McKeown