



STABILITY *in* MOTION

Feel the Floor

Let's find it.

Gently squeeze where the pelvic floor is in your mental map by imagining you need to pee and hold it in. Then let it go.

Now do the same thing only imagine holding in a fart. Feel free to chuckle if it makes you laugh. Stay gentle. Now let it go.

Why?

- That's it - That's your pelvic floor.
- If you squeeze tightly, you are likely going to over grip, or start using muscles we don't want to engage right now (like your butt muscles or your leg muscles or your superficial abdominal muscles (6 pack muscles))

Now let's reallllly feel it with the Pelvic Floor Breathwork exercise where we'll practice relaxing it - engaging it - relaxing it again - all with our breath.

A note before we begin:

This practice is just that - a practice! If you don't feel all the things I'm saying there are to feel, that is okay! Remember when you learned to write? You started with learning what letters even are, then how to draw them (because let's be real, writing is drawing symbols we call letters), then how to string them together, and then making those strings turn into words that other people who can read recognize. We still can't even read them yet, we're just banking on the idea that someone taught us well! The intuition for writing out words and sentences takes time, and so does breath work, so does engaging with the pelvic floor.

So keep practicing. There is no amount of time that is too long to do this for, no amount of days a week that is too many. You might want to make sure you aren't neglecting necessary tasks for it, but you also might want to consider this practice a necessary task for your well being, to make sure that you create the time for it.

Be gentle. Allow the movements and sensations rather than forcing them. Luckily for us, this is the way our bodies were designed to move, so by allowing them to do so, we are getting out of our own way, clearing away layers of new movement patterns we've learned, and letting the breath find its way back home.

Okay - on to Pelvic Floor Breathwork!

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Pelvic Floor Breathwork

Let's get set up:

Carve out a space in your schedule, your mind, your heart and your home that is:

- about 15 minutes long
- mentally curious and receptive
- emotionally available and well resourced (feeling strong, self loving, and steady)
- physically quiet, cozy, and unoccupied by others.

Now come into Restorative Position: Lay on the floor/bed/couch/surface that allows your back to be on the ground, your feet on the ground in front of you and scooted about 2-3 inches out to the side, and your knees in the air and leaning in to touch one another.

Why?

- It allows your body to be supported and relaxed.
- Keeps your low back close to the floor allowing you to feel the breath pouring into the lower abdomen
- It pulls you away from your normal eye level, and therefore the world of thoughts by giving you a different visual perspective than your normal waking hours are made up of.

Feel the body in general: Feel what is not the pelvic floor so we can feel the pelvic floor better

- Sway your legs side to side.
- Wiggle your torso (like you are a very excited puppy wagging their tail by wriggling their whole body)
- Breathe in and laugh loudly. It can be a fake laugh, big and hearty.
- Breath in and cough (can be a fake laugh)

Why?

- Because we want to feel the way our muscles engage in our backs, in our bellies, on our sides when we move in different ways (wiggling and swaying) and use our breath in different ways (laughing coughing).
- Because it may make you feel a little silly, fun, embarrassed, nervous which gives you a sense of how open/self conscious/easeful you may be feeling, which is important to be aware of about ourselves (notice how does that emotion affect your pelvic floor/your breathe/tension in your shoulders and neck)
- We get some movement out of our system to get us ready to settle into being more still.

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Now here we go!

- Place one hand on each hip, fingers and maybe palms resting on the soft space of your low belly just inside the hip bones.
- Breathe for a while - about 60 seconds, which will feel wayyyyy longer than 60 seconds.
- Start to breathe a little bit slower. Take some extra time breathing in, some extra time breathing out. Do this for 60 more seconds, getting however slow feels natural and good to get.
- Keep doing that, and add these pieces to breathe slower still: add a smalllllll pause at the top of your inhale - letting the air stay in your lungs for a moment before you exhale it out - and the bottom of your exhale - and let your lungs linger on empty for just a moment before letting air fill them again.
- Keep going this way for another 60 seconds.
- Maintain all of this, allowing - not forcing - all parts of your breath get slower, slower, slower in a neutral, comfortable way.
- Now start to notice your hands if you have not already
- Notice if you feel your breath moving your hands at all.
- Without trying to change anything, or forcing your breath in any particular way, keep breathing and imagine you have a balloon inside of your pelvis.
- Picture your breath pulling air into the balloon, air coming from the inside of your rib cage and filling it up so that it expands the 360* space between your belly button and your pubic bone: your back, your sides, your front, and the space between your legs.
- Exhale and let the balloon deflate, allowing all those spaces to sink back into their smaller form.
- Inhale. Imagine you feel the top of the balloon with rests just inside your vagina, your anus, your perineum expanding slightly, subtly. This is your pelvic floor. This is your pelvic floor relaxing.
- Exhale and let the balloon deflate, give it some assistance at the end of the deflation, my doing that gentle squeeze as though you are holding in that pee/fart, maybe allow (not force, allow) the muscles of your whole abdominal ring to just barely hug in (the way they do when you cough or laugh your deep belly laugh) This is your pelvic floor contracting.
- Inhale - repeat
- Exhale - repeat
- So on...

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Emerge

Rather than simply stopping and getting up to go, we are going to **Integrate** the world around us into the space we've created. This will encourage the awareness you created for yourself of your pelvic floor to become part of your normal breath.

To do this, when you are about 2-3 minutes away from being done with the exercise, maintain the breathing pattern while you begin to incorporate your physical space back into your awareness.

- Keeping your hands on the belly, start to subtly sway your legs from side to side, tap your finger tips against your skin, move your neck from side to side, open and close your jaw, sigh audible sighs.... Anything intuitive for you
- Add in a few more audible, tangible shifts, all while keeping up the breathing.
- After 30-60 seconds of this, open your eyes slowly, keeping the breathing practice and the movement in your body alive
- Stay with your breath and that movement as you look around the room
- Your breath will begin to get a bit more shallow as you do this. Let it.
- Make your motions bigger. Release your hands from your hips and start bringing in stretching, funny movements, more sounds, even humming, singing, laughing, or talking to yourself.
- Begin to sit, come to all fours, stand, or whatever feels good and keep up the funky, intuitive movements you've been creating.
- After at least 30 seconds of that (and up to as long as you'd like), you are ready for the world.

Completion

Try on a smile, thanking yourself for the gift of that time and exploration.

Continue into the rest of life, bringing this new found awareness and some appreciation for your **lovely self**.

