

“LET’S START AT THE VERY BEGINNING...”

BODY ALIGNMENT

Stand with feet hip-distance apart
Feel tall from underarms to hips, and from nape of neck to base of spine
Floating ribs are raised
Lower abdominals are released/soft
Chest is broad/wide- explore the feeling of the distance between shoulders
Facial muscles are relaxed
Jaw is slightly unhinged
Tip of tongue rests comfortably at base of lower teeth (or upper teeth)

POSTURAL EXERCISE

Place heels of both feet, calf muscles, buttocks, shoulder blades, back of head against a wall
Take some deep breaths, breathing into this aligned position
If you feel resistance- parts of the body don’t want to touch the wall- accept that for now
When ready, move forward, away from the wall, maintaining posture
Observe how you feel- explore with curiosity
Practice this several times a day, and try to keep body aligned, seated, standing, walking

DOGGY PANTING

Check “BODY ALIGNMENT” per above, and maintain through this exercise
Place one hand on chest, one on lower abdominals
Tip of tongue relaxes at base of lower teeth (or upper teeth)
Jaw is relaxed, with lower jaw slightly unslung and hanging back toward the neck
Bathe the roof of mouth with small “puffs” of air- inhale and exhale slowly, observing the belly expand on inhalations, contract on exhalations
Keep a slow tempo- inhalations/exhalations of equal length (think German Shepherd, not Chihuahua)

EASY CONSCIOUS BREATHING EXERCISE

Sit in a comfortable chair with a tall, supported back- use cushions, if necessary, for support
Feet are relaxed on floor/ground
Rest hands comfortably in lap, palms facing upward
Jaw is relaxed; tip of tongue touching space between upper teeth
Close the eyes softly
Breathe in through nostrils to a slow mental count of 1-2-3-4
Pause and hold breath for a few seconds
Exhale out through mouth to a slow mental count of at least 1-2-3-4-5-6
Pause and hold breath for a few seconds
Repeat for four breath cycles
Over time, see if you can make the exhalation at least twice as long as the inhalation