

A woman with long, dark dreadlocks is standing in a forest. She is wearing a dark green, long-sleeved shirt and has her arms outstretched to the sides. Her head is tilted back, and she has a serene expression. The background is filled with tall, thin tree trunks, creating a bokeh effect of light and shadow. The overall mood is peaceful and natural.

THE WHOLE BODY EXHALE



The Whole Body Exhale Practice

I learned this simple but effective practice from Rachael Maddox, who teaches the Rebloom trauma-informed coach training that I completed.

This is great for when you need doable, ground-level resourcing and for when you need access to your most reliable, tried and true ways to reclaim some space, perspective and stability.

Instructions:

Set aside 10 minutes minimum. You can take longer with it if that feels welcome. Print this out or just grab your notebook and pen.

Start by getting comfortable sitting, standing or lying down. If it feels good, place your hands on your chest or belly and notice your breath moving under your hands.

After a few breaths, let your next exhale mark the start of your breath cycle, rather than the inhale. Take a few rounds of breath like this...

On your exhale gently but completely expel the air out of your lungs. and the pause for a brief moment.

When you're ready, simply relax and the in-breath will happen quite easily, with no effort on your part.



The Whole Body Exhale Practice

After you've experienced this sensation of completely exhaling a few times, and making space for your breath to flow in, you might finish with a big sigh.

Notice how it feels to make sound and let go of some tension in your body on the out breath.

Take a moment here and pay attention to how it feels at the body level to exhale fully, and also, how it feels at the mental and emotional levels. There's no right way to feel of course...

When you're ready, grab your pen and start listing a few things that help you connect with a similar feeling of ease, release, spaciousness or calm.

The more doable and readily available, the better!

Drinking a whole glass of water, slowly and with presence.

A hug from a trusted human.

Listening to a certain song.

A warm bath.

The smell and taste of a favourite comfort food.

It could be anything so let the ideas flow!

Keep this list where you can refer to easily. Add to it anytime you think of something that you can easily call on when you need it most.



