



# Finishing Well Yoga

Yoga at home and in the workplace

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**Dear Friend,**

The Magic Breath Tool Kit offers you a way to help reduce stress and anxiety, and lead you to a calm place of joy! What is this Kit? Let me digress a bit...

2,500 years ago, the yoga sutras were compiled by Sage Patanjali, a scholar who is credited with the first written words about this ancient practice. It is believed that yoga may have its roots going back 4,000 years but it was never recorded because writing instruments were not available at that time. Regardless of when it started, the practice of yoga is significant because it has survived for centuries and is currently much sought after around the world.

For those who don't know, the practice of yoga is more than the physical postures we use in the west. There are actually eight 'limbs' of yoga, one of which is pranayama (breath work). This is my focus in this article, as well as how it can impact us now, in 2016.

**Kripalu**, the largest yoga and health center in the US, has developed a certification program that teaches how to bring yoga into prisons, healthcare organizations, veterans programs (including assisting soldiers with PTSD), and our schools. After my certification, I have been fortunate to have been able to introduce yoga to our Saugatuck/Douglas school system with an emphasis on stress reduction techniques. Hence, the Magic Breath Tool Kit!

This kit offers you 5 of the 13 tools that have been proven over the centuries to help reduce stress, calm the mind, and help you stay in a rest and relaxation mode. The first tool, the Letting Go Breath, is the easiest to use and, when done with a light sigh on the exhale, can be used in front of others without them knowing that you are actively moving toward a more restful state.

The rest of the 13 tools are being put together but all of us who have worked on this project want to encourage you to try these first 5 techniques and share them with your family, co-workers, and friends. What have you got to lose? Well, stress and anxiety, for starters. See the self-care article below.

Because I believe in the benefits of this Magic Breath Tool Kit, I am offering a free class at our home for those who want to learn to use these tools. Students of all ages are welcome.

**Tuesday, May 24, 7:00pm – 7:45pm**

**555 Lake Street #3, Saugatuck**

Please [email](#) if you'd like to join us.

Namaste,

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**My 2016 Classes**

### **Kripalu Yoga for Teachers**

3:30pm - 4:30pm  
Wednesdays in the Library  
3/9 - 6/8  
Saugatuck High School

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### **Private Sessions**

Call 616-340-7338  
for private sessions.

Click [here](#) to visit my  
website for more  
information.

### **Kripalu Yoga in the Schools (KYIS)**

10:34am - 11:47am  
Wednesdays & Fridays  
Grades 10, 11, & 12  
with co-teacher Ms. Austin  
Saugatuck High School

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### **Yoga for All Ages**

"Moderate Yoga"  
and  
"Gentle Yoga"  
are done for the summer.

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### **Definitions Corner**



#### **Ayurveda**

a form of holistic alternative  
medicine that is the  
traditional system of  
medicine in India, leading to  
self-care

### **Saugatuck High School Student Yoga Club**

4/12 - 6/5  
3pm - 4pm  
Tuesdays in the Library  
5pm - 6pm  
Sundays in the Pit

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## **Self-Care Article**

### **Magic Breath Tool Kit**

The following breathing exercises are your magic tools to help you relax and reduce stress, diminish anxiety, and stay grounded and connected.

These exercises can be used before taking tests or engaging in social situations, when dealing with parents and loved ones, and to help you stay calm and composed within. These will also help you stay focused and less likely to be pulled toward actions that might not be healthy for you or in which you do not want to be involved.

#### **Letting Go Breath (Instant Tranquilizer Technique)**

This tool is surprisingly effective and will help you remain steady and comfortable in many situations. The "Letting Go Breath" is experienced by taking a deep breath in through the nostrils then opening the mouth and letting all the air out with a sigh. The sigh can be silent or audible depending upon the situation. For instance, a silent sigh can be used during a test or when speaking with someone in a challenging situation. The audible breath ("haaaaa") would be appropriate while driving in heavy traffic, when you're alone, or during group yoga classes.

#### **Three Part Breath (Complete Yogic Breathing)**

The "Three Part Breath" utilizes the full capacity of the lungs. By consciously breathing into each of the separate areas of the body, we take in more air than we normally do, and benefit the body in the following ways:

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- Calms and relaxes the mind
- Offers a full exchange of air in the lungs
- Oxygenates the blood
- Releases tension in the chest and abdomen
- Provides a gentle massage to abdominal organs, improving digestion

Instructions:

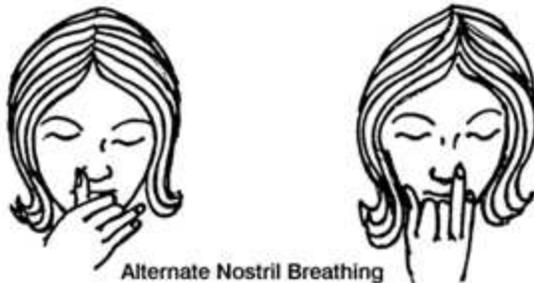
1. Sit comfortably and feel the crown of your head rise to set your posture.
2. Place your palms on your belly, breathe through the nostrils, and allow the belly to expand like a basketball, filling the lungs full of oxygen. Exhale, bringing the navel and spine close together again. Repeat several times.
3. Place your palms to the sides of your rib cage. Began breathing into the belly then into the ribs, allowing the ribs to flair like the gills of a fish. Exhale from the ribs first, then from the belly. Repeat several times.
4. Place the finger tips on the front of your chest just below your collar bones. Began breathing into the belly, then into the ribs, and lastly into the chest, feeling your fingers rise with the breath. Fill the lungs fully, hesitate for a brief moment, and then exhale from the chest, then the ribs, and finally the belly.
5. Rest your hands on your lap and continue this 3 part breathing pattern, at your own rate, for several rounds.

### **Alternate Nostril Breathing**

This technique helps settle and balance the two hemispheres of the brain as well as integrating the whole body. It allows the entire body to function as a whole unit and is extremely helpful before tests or in stressful situations. Alternate nostril breathing can seem strange to students who have never experienced it before but the benefits can be felt.

Instructions:

1. Place your thumb to the outside of the right nostril and your ring finger to the outside of the left nostril.



2. Seal the right nostril and inhale deeply through the left nostril.
3. Seal the left nostril and exhale completely through the right nostril.
4. Continue to seal the left nostril and inhale through the right nostril.
5. Seal right nostril and exhale through left nostril.
6. The pattern is inhale left, exhale right, inhale right, exhale left. Repeat this sequence several times.

### **Ocean Sounding Breath**

Ocean Sounding Breath" (OSB) helps relax the mind and draws our attention to the self. This movement of breath helps us stay focused in the moment and keeps our attention from wandering.

Instructions:

1. Established a steady and even Three Part Breath.
  2. Open the mouth, constrict the back of the throat, and whisper the sound "eeeeee" on
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- the inhalation and “haaaaaa” on the exhalation, cultivating a steady, smooth sound.
3. Close the mouth and continue through the nose, whispering “eeeeee” and “haaaaaa” to create a soft, smooth sound (like an ocean) from the back of your throat. If the transition to a closed mouth seems awkward, begin by placing a hand in front of your open mouth and on the exhale, pretend you are fogging up a mirror (your hand) while making the “haaaaaa” sound. Then close the mouth and continue with the ocean sound (also known as the Darth Vader sound).
  4. Close the eyes and continue to breathe deeply with Ocean Sounding Breath.

**BRFWA (Breathe, Relax, Feel, Watch, Allow)**

BRFWA helps you remain within the self and not be pulled out into other energy that may be flowing around you, such as from another person who is upset or agitated.

Instructions:

1. At the first sign of disturbance, take a deep breath. Breathe in deeply, feeling within the body that you are pulling back into yourself.
2. With the next inhalation, relax the body and feel the muscles and tensions letting go.
3. With the next inhalation, feel all you can feel within your body, physically, emotionally, and mentally. You might find concern, happiness, joy, sadness. Feel whatever there is to feel.
4. With the next inhalation, watch the unfolding experience using your witness consciousness (your capacity to observe without judgement). Sense who you are as the witness. No action is needed.
5. With the next inhalation, allow the other person to engage you in whatever manner they choose but allow yourself to stay within yourself, hopefully calm and relaxed.

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Live.Life.Healthy

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