

Ep #147: Exploring Your Breath Part 5 – Mechanics of Breathing: A Gentle Practice 2



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With Your Host

Susi Hately

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Male Announcer: You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hately. You will hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hately.

Welcome and welcome back. We are in the middle of a miniseries on exploring your breath. And with this practice today we are going to take a feel into the feet, into the hips, and the abdomen, do some twisting, and just get a sense of the body movement and breathing, bringing them together and see what happens as you explore both movement and breath.

This is a run up to my course I'm leading in January called The Mechanics of Breathing 3.0, my third iteration of a program I've been running for over 10 years. And this year I am bringing in my dentist who is so amazing at working with sleep apnea, grinding issues, looking at the airway, not only from the airway biomechanics, but the relationship to all of the body on the airway.

So not just what's going on in the jaw and the neck, but also like how the pelvis impacts. I mean he's just this remarkable fellow. So that course can be found at learn.functionalsynergy.com/breathing, and you can read all about it. And join me for a great 10 week program.

Today though, we are going to explore movement and breath. It will require you to be on your back and on the floor, or mostly on the back. So when you're ready, if this resonates with you, come to the floor, find some space, maybe close the door, get yourself comfy.

We're going to first start by tuning into the feet and into the breath. And then we're going to move the legs, we'll bring the knee to the belly, add some twisting. If you need any extra support, have it close by if needed.

So let's just notice. Take a notice of how your breath is today. I love the responsivity of the breath to our environment, both our internal environment as well as our external environment. Sometimes it's easy to get annoyed or

[From Pain to Possibility](#) with Susi Hately

Ep #147: Exploring Your Breath Part 5 – Mechanics of Breathing: A Gentle Practice 2

even pissed off at the way one's body is responding. And one of the messages I really love to teach my clientele is that your body is responding perfectly.

And I know that can sometimes be difficult to digest. And yet our bodies respond to the forces at play. What we make it mean through our mind, totally different game, yeah? But our bodies are responding. So when we're noticing what our bodies are doing, it's so fascinating because they're giving us such great information.

Information that might be difficult to discern when we're first starting to really delve into and dive into our bodies. Particularly if you're a highly cognitive person where you're very logically based, to feel one's body can sometimes be a bit foreign. So whether you're new to this or whether you are a health professional or a yoga teacher who teaches others, let's just roll into it.

We'll begin at your feet. And let's begin with the spaces between your toes. The top and the bottoms of your feet. Where the heel is and how that connects to your ankle, both sides. And can you be aware of both this awareness of your feet plus your breath?

So you're zooming in on the feet and then allowing yourself to zoom out, feel the breath and feel your feet. And then allow yourself to zoom in again to where your legs connect to your pelvis, so your hip joint. And roll your legs out and then in. Roll your legs out and then in. And imagine that as your legs are rolling out you are inhaling, and as you're rolling your legs in you are exhaling.

Now, if that way of breathing and moving makes no sense for your body or for your mind, let it go completely. The key is to simply notice your legs moving, your breath moving. Just be sure that there's no increase of strain or pain through your back, or your knees, or your hips, or your ribcage, or your jaw.

Ep #147: Exploring Your Breath Part 5 – Mechanics of Breathing: A Gentle Practice 2

If you feel any kind of ramping starting through your hamstrings or your feet, ease it back off a bit. Okay, now from here let the legs settle out and start to bring your right leg towards your belly. So the knee comes to your belly. But here's the thing, as you do it can you keep your pelvis quiet? So you're only moving that leg bone in the hip socket.

A lot of times, when we bring that leg to the belly, the pelvis goes into a posterior tilt and our back flattens to the floor. Can you do this, not holding your back in place or your pelvis in place, but just allowing those parts to stay where they are and the leg moves toward your belly? So it's moving solely in that hip socket.

You might not move as far, that's all right. I'm just curious if you can do this so that we just focus in on that leg bone movement in the pelvis. And then while you're holding that leg, can you move your foot around in circles?

Okay, now notice the breath. Where has it gone? Is it still there? What's the quality like? And then roll the ankle in the opposite direction. Can you zoom out enough that you can feel both the ankle moving as well as yourself breathing?

And then gently now let that leg come across your body. We're coming into a twist and the shoulder stays easy on the ground as the leg comes across, the pelvis might lift and moving yourself into a twist.

All right, now check with your breath. Did you hold your breath as you were doing this? And if so just back it off a little bit and then try again without forcing your breath. But can you zoom out again enough that you move and you breathe? You breathe and you move.

Shoulder girdle is easy on the ground. And then come on back. And then let's switch to the other side, but first notice as you let that first leg come back to the floor do you notice anything new or different through your body and or your breath?

Ep #147: Exploring Your Breath Part 5 – Mechanics of Breathing: A Gentle Practice 2

And then bring your opposite knee to your belly. Again, can you keep your pelvis quiet and just have that leg bone move in the hip socket? And then with your hands either holding the back of the thigh or around the knee, whatever is the most comfy, move that ankle in a circle.

Notice what's going on with your breath. Did it start to get held? Did it kind of hide? Did your jaw get tense? Okay, now can you feel the whole of your body while moving that ankle, switch the direction, and can you be breathing? Can these exist simultaneously?

And then let's gently move into that twist, so the leg comes across the body. Shoulder girdle is on the ground so the shoulders don't move at all. And that leg comes across, maybe the pelvis lifts into a twist. Easy, easy, easy breath.

Only go as far as you can easily feel yourself breathing. And then bring it back and let the legs straighten out away from you. And notice what you feel. And then bring your feet up, knees bent. So bending at the knees, letting the bottoms of the feet come to the floor. And we'll move into some pelvic tilts and tuck.

So bring yourself into a pelvic tuck and then a gentle tilt. And as you're doing that tuck and the tilt, what's happening with your breath? Is there a natural rhythm your breath wants to move into? Can you feel your body responding to how your breath wants to move as you go into a tuck and a tilt? And then let that come to quiet. Okay, tune into the breath again. And is there anything new or different that's present with your breath?

Now bring your arms beside you if they aren't already beside you, and imagine the idea of snow angels. And with your arms on the floor, the back of your hands on the floor, start to move the arms up toward being overhead, but your hands and your arms are resting on the ground. So you're making a snow angel, so to speak, on your floor.

Ep #147: Exploring Your Breath Part 5 – Mechanics of Breathing: A Gentle Practice 2

And can you only move as far as your breathing is easy, and that your full arm stays on the floor? Jaw is easy. Pelvis and back are easy. And only move, if you want to play with this idea, only move as far as the breathing is easy. So it might slow down your movement. It might tune you in more to the connection between your arm and your torso. You might even notice other relationships in your lower back or your neck or your head or anywhere else that I haven't mentioned.

So the arms are coming up, and then they're going back down, you're making the metaphorical snow angel on your floor. Now, I've only been queuing the arms. And if you would like to add the legs, you can do the same thing. Can you keep your pelvis quiet as your limbs move? And can you zoom out enough that you can notice your limbs moving and yourself breathing?

So it's not one or the other, it's definitely a both. Sometimes we have the capacity to move our limbs quite far, but at the expense of our breath kind of falling into hiding. So can you move a little less far perhaps and also allow the breath, yeah? See how the two interplay.

And oftentimes what happens for people is initially the movement will be smaller, for sure. But then as they practice, the movement expands with this connection. And then with this connection, there's some other cool things that start to arise which I can't specifically name for you because it's unique to each person.

And then from here, bring the arms and the legs back to where they were or wherever is comfortable. And now connect in, notice what is present. Feel how you feel the breath in your body.

And if this has resonated with you and you would like to dig in more and more, we'll dig into a lot more anatomy and mechanics, provide a lot more practices for you, you can read all about it at learn.functionalsynergy.com/breathing. I would love, love, love to see you

Ep #147: Exploring Your Breath Part 5 – Mechanics of Breathing: A Gentle Practice 2

for the 10 weeks beginning January the 16th. Take good care. See you next week.

If this episode has resonated and you're looking to deepen this idea of getting your body back on board, of listening deeply to your symptoms, of listening to the whispers so you don't have to hear the screams and you're looking for one to one support or professional training, then reach out to us at health@functionalsynergy.com where we can customize your learning path. That's health@functionalsynergy.com. Looking forward to hearing from you.