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ABN 67 079 419 837

Full Body Relaxation - 20 minutes for best effect
Focus: Breath reaching deep into the body

In a warm, quiet space, lie on your back on a carpeted floor (Pilates mat). If you need to, support your neck and/or lower back with soft, flat towels. Ensure that the head is not pushed forward by the support – this will constrict the neck. Place your lower legs up on a chair/sofa in such a position that the thighs are perpendicular to the floor. The backs of your thighs may touch the rise of the chair/sofa which takes the weight of the lower legs by supporting your calves and feet.

Ensure that your body feels comfortable and gives itself to the support provided by the floor and the chair/sofa. You may need to wriggle about a bit to get comfortable. Ensure true alignment of the hips, knees and feet. Your arms are roughly at 45° to your body, with hands relaxed, palms facing the ceiling. Release your body to the floor; feel its support. Identify where the support gives your body 'relief' and lets you release tight carriage and tension from your body.

As you relax into the floor, become aware of the natural rhythm of your breath entering and leaving your body. Enjoy the sensation. You may find that you sigh, yawn, stretch and breathe deeply as you relax. If your mind wanders, bring it back gently to the breath's rhythm.

Apply the strategy of 'breath for voice' by taking a breath in through your nose and releasing it out through an open mouth; this will happen naturally as the lower jaw relaxes. The sensation is a slow, steady intake and release of the breath.

After a while, shift your attention to the placement of the breath. You are likely to be aware of the in-breath reaching the base of the lungs; eventually the softness of the stomach and those parts of the spine and ribcage that rest against the floor. Sense the rise and fall of the mid-stomach and the diaphragm. Develop your ability to sense movement in the lower stomach and pelvic region.

As you progress in your familiarity and ease with the exercise, you are likely to increase your awareness of sympathetic movement in the lower back and pelvic area. These movements will increase and further release any guardedness as you relax deeper into the exercise.

There should be little to no upper chest movement as the breath moves into the base of the lungs. Sustain this state for as long as you are able. Some Voice & Word clients have fallen asleep while doing the exercise!

When ready, slowly, slowly, take your legs off the chair, roll onto your side, lie there for a while and then slowly stand up. Feel the difference in your body. Confirm the breath placement as being low in the soft tissue area of your body before you move on with your day.

This exercise is wonderful for improved voice placement and the use of voice across the optimum pitch level. It is also excellent for your general well-being. Remember to let me know how you progressed with this exercise. Make contact via email, the website or a direct call to my mobile.

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