



Mind
and
breathe



BREATH TO SUCCESS - FOUNDATIONS

Life starts and ends with a breath. The breath creates the foundation on which everything else is built. It has the ability to help us prepare, practice and perform, and is a key component in how we manage our lived experience of stress.

Stress is a physiological response in the body and Front Line Workers spend a large percentage of their chosen career training to work in a stress environment. This means working with the bodies stress response, equally as important for Front Line Workers is their ability for their body to move efficiently between stress and relaxation in the body.

What does this actually mean?

#DOStress



When the body is in stress it automatically adapts to take you into the fight/flight/freeze response. This is important to help us focus and manage the situation we are in at that time. Often we can be long out of that situation before our nervous system catches up.

When the body doesn't move out of the stress response regularly or there are long gaps in-between. It means that balance isn't restored so chemicals like cortisol continue to be released and blood flow continues to be redirected. Over time this can lead to physical and emotional ill health and what we call chronic stress.

Breath exercises are often used as a reactive measure for many. It can feel forced and difficult even when there is some obvious relief.

If we adopt the Prepare and Practice approach, then our body creates a habit that means it not only makes it easier for you to use your breath to decompress the body but it becomes easier and the nervous system gets very efficient at doing it.



One of the first things we become disconnected from when we spend longer periods in a stress response is the body.

By using breath work techniques we become more connected with the body and the different sensations happening. This creates a mindful connection and gives us the opportunity not only to have greater control but to understand what we might need.

All this can be done with just a few minutes each day.

Sound hard? Time is after all precious to most of us. Start with 1 minute of just becoming conscious of the breath. Then maybe set the timer to 2 minutes. If 2 minutes is all you have, take it and do it at the same time every day.

When it becomes easier to connect, try extending the exhale, count if it is easier to focus. Before you know it you will have a fully established habit that supports your ability to manage the transition in and out of stress for your body. Try out one of the videos on YouTube for support - www.youtube.com/@yogaforthefrontline