

# Three Easy Exercises to Replenish You

## The Stimulating Breath

For times that call for a quick pick-me-up – when you get a little drowsy behind the wheel or feel that mid-afternoon slump at your desk – here's a yogic exercise that works faster than a cup of coffee. Commonly known as the "bellows breath," it's also called the stimulating breath. The first time you try to exercise, keep it up for no longer than fifteen seconds, then breathe normally. Each time you do it, increase the duration by increments of five seconds, if you can, until you work up to a full minute.

1. Sit with your back straight and put your tongue in the yogic position, as described in the Take a Breather article. Hold it there for the duration of the exercise.
2. Inhale and exhale very rapidly through your nose, keeping your mouth tightly closed. Your inhalations and exhalations should be of equal length and as short as possible, and you should do them as fast as possible. You should feel muscular effort at the base of your neck just above the collarbone and at your diaphragm (place your hands on these spots to feel the movement). The action of your chest should be rapid and mechanical, like a bellows pumping air.
3. Resume normal breathing.

## The Ultimate Three-Minute Oxygen Booster

Anytime is a good time to boost your energy, creativity, focus, and inspiration. Try this:

1. Sit with your arms stretched out to your sides, at shoulder level.
2. Bring your arms up over your head, so that your wrists cross.
3. Begin breathing for ultimate oxygenation: through your nose only. This forces you to take deeper breaths. Breathe with your whole chest and stomach. Stay focused.

## Total Body Tension Tamer/Energizer

You are exhausted, barely able to keep your eyes open – and it's only two in the afternoon. Don't fight it. Remember, when your eyes are tired, everything is tired. Times like this, a nap would be ideal, but for most of us, that's unrealistic. Try the following nap-replacing energizer:

1. At a table (or desk), sit with your feet flat on the floor and rest your elbows on the table. It's important to keep your head up and your spine straight, so if necessary, place a pillow, books, or a stack of papers under your elbows.
2. Rub your palms together until they feel warm, then bring them to your eyes, but don't touch your eyes. Keep your fingers interlocked just above the bridge of your nose.
3. Close your eyes and breathe deeply and rhythmically (see "Take a Breather" article). Imagine that air circulating behind your eyes and carrying away with it all the tension in your body.
4. Continue breathing this way until you feel refreshed. Or until someone taps you on the shoulder and tells you to get back to work!