



Waiting to Exhale

We come into this world with our first breath and we leave after our last breath; and in between we are holding our breath and waiting, waiting to exhale.

One of my favorite yoga teachers would say “resistance to breathing is resistance to change and resistance to change is resistance to life; inhale deeply friend”.

Breath holding occurs under stress or threat. It can also occur when we are anticipating something or wanting something to happen: this is the origin of the phrase, "Don't hold your breath!" when expected things may not come true.

Holding your breath means that your breathing is restricted because of increased tension in the muscles responsible for breathing. Chronic breath holding is not healthy because the muscular effort, coupled with the effects of stress on the nervous, hormonal, and immune systems, can impair both physical and psychological function.

How can you help yourself overcome breath holding habits? One of the ways is to take classes that support breath awareness (like in The Joy Lab... wink wink). These types of classes fully help you become aware of your breathing patterns and teach you how to breathe fully and deeply.

But I want to talk about the emotional component of why you might be holding your breath. Anger and fear (anxiety) create poor breathing patterns that negatively affect your health. Holding on to unresolved emotions can lead to breathing disorders like asthma, shortness of breath and even cardiovascular disease.

So, make the choice this month to notice your breathing patterns. You might find that you notice the tension or discomfort in your body first but go a little deeper and see if you are, perhaps, holding your breath. Then ask yourself these three questions:

1. What am I resisting in life?
2. What am I holding on to that I would be willing to let go of?
3. What am I carrying that is not mine?

These thought-provoking questions will give you insight as to what areas in your life you might want to explore. See what comes up, and be open to what good could come from this. And, if you would like to chat about your answers, you know where to find me.

“inhale deeply friend....”