

# LEBERT

FITNESS® FOR ALL

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## Fitness Fundamentals for Beginners 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO KEY FORMS OF EXERCISE

- Cardio & Core•
- High Intensity Interval Training•
- Strength Training•
- Mobility•
- BONUS: Breathing Facts & Fiction•





## Welcome, we're glad you're here

Here at Lebert Fitness, our mantra is fitness for all.

We know that fitness and exercise is so personal. Everyone has different goals, different interests, different budgets, and different lifestyles, but everyone also deserves to find a routine that works for them.

That's why we have been helping individuals and families with their at-home fitness routines since 2004. We strive to provide you with the tools, education and environment to be the best version of yourself, and make getting there easy.

That's why the exercises throughout this program have two options: with Lebert Fitness equipment and without.

Lebert Fitness products are versatile, portable and effective tools that can be used by anyone at any fitness level - from beginner to the elite athlete. But even if you haven't tried our products yet, we still want to help you on your fitness journey, so that's why we have given you bodyweight and dumbbell options, too. We really mean it when we say that we believe in **Fitness for All**.



## A Note From Marc

I fell in love with fitness way back in college when I first stepped into a weight room, but I do know and respect that we all take different approaches and paths to our health and wellness. I have worked with many people who start focusing on their fitness both early in life as well as those in their 40s, 50s and beyond. I have seen people do their first proper squat after an injury, their first workout after having a baby and have been inspired by watching people's bodies and level of confidence transform with each passing rep.

Whatever motivated you to download this ebook and get started on your fitness journey, I am so glad you're here.

I hope our experts educate and inspire you. I hope these foundational and fundamental exercises will teach you to love moving your body. I hope this is the jump-start to a long, successful (whatever that means to you!) journey to health, and a life-long love of fitness.

*Marc Lebert, Founder & Chief Fitness Officer, Lebert Fitness*

# Meet Your Guides

Each section of this program has been developed by a fitness, health and wellness expert from the Lebert Fitness community. At the beginning of the section, you can read a quick bio on each expert to fully understand why we hand-picked them to help you with your at-home fitness.

You'll meet movement coach, Luiza; mom of 4, Nichelle; personal trainer and veterinarian, Jesse; and personal trainer and nutritionist, Ana.

All of their stories are unique and inspiring... we hope you love them as much as we do.



# How To Use The Guide

Each section includes a full, ready-to-go workout plan. Underneath "The Workout" title, you will see instructions on how to complete the circuit. It may be a timed circuit or a rep-based circuit, depending on the exercises.

You can perform the circuit as directed to form a complete workout, or simply add individual exercises to your own routine.

As these are set routines, you may find that you need to customize it to suit your own ability.

*Make it easier:*

Slow down, do fewer reps, or take longer breaks in between rounds.

*Make it harder:*

Speed up, do more reps, don't take breaks in between rounds, complete more rounds, and pay attention to the "progression" cues at the bottom of some exercises.

To get the most out of this plan, try to always go a little bit farther than your previous session. If you've completed the Core Cardio workout once at 3 rounds, try for 4 rounds next time! You will see better results if you challenge yourself each time.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Aerobic:** Cardiovascular conditioning over longer periods of time. Your heart rate increases, your breathing quickens, and you probably get sweaty. Some classic aerobic exercises are: running, walking, swimming and biking.

**Anaerobic:** Quick bursts of energy where you use maximum effort. Think: strength training, jumping, sprinting for a short period.

**Concentric:** Shortening or contracting a muscle. In a biceps curl movement, this is when you bring your hand up to your shoulder.

**Eccentric:** Lengthening the muscle. When you release your bicep curl and bring your hand back down to your hip.

**HIIT:** High intensity interval training. Alternating between bursts of anaerobic movement and exercise using your maximum effort with short breaks in between. HIIT is meant to get your heart rate up!

**Isometric:** When you hold the muscle in a specific position, with no concentric or eccentric movement. A classic isometric exercise is a plank hold.

**LISS:** Low intensity steady state, an alternative to HIIT. Here, you train at around 50-60% of your maximum for a longer period of time. A great LISS workout is a fast-paced walk.

**Rep:** A single repetition of a movement. One burpee, for example.

**Round:** Completing all exercises in a workout, once through. After the end of your first round, you often take a short break and then start again with the first exercise.



# Jesse Benjamin

Jesse Benjamin is Mi'kmaq, a Certified Personal Trainer, and a small animal Veterinarian.

Her love for sports started in elementary school and carried on throughout her entire schooling, even into University where she competed on the track-and-field and the cross country teams. However, as she started her career and family, she stopped exercising for about 7 years. It was during this time she lost part of herself. It took a major life change to realize she was no longer prioritizing herself, or her health. After her fourth child, she decided to start working out again.

It was after being told by a friend how she had inspired her to start making healthy life choices, that she considered becoming a personal trainer. She obtained her certification in October 2017 and now helps busy people incorporate fitness and good nutrition into their lives through online training so they can feel strong, be healthy and live well.

She currently resides in Halifax, NS, with her 4 children, 2 dogs and 3 cats. She can be found at @jesse\_benjamin\_

on Instagram where she shares daily workouts, motivation, and practical advice on living a healthy lifestyle. Jesse can also be found at [www.twoeyedwellness.com](http://www.twoeyedwellness.com)



# CORE & CARDIO

## Why Train Your Core?

Having a strong core is beneficial to everyone. Your core muscles are the centre of your body and they literally are the support base for it. They completely surround and support your spine and pelvis and connect your upper body and lower body. This connection allows the transfer of forces from one part of your body to the other while you are performing exercises and day-to-day activities.

## Why Cardiovascular Train?

Cardiovascular training or aerobic training strengthens your heart and helps it pump more effectively. Regular cardiovascular training helps to lower your blood pressure, raises "good" cholesterol and lowers "bad" cholesterol, helps regulate sugar levels, reduces chronic pain, and so much more!



INCLUDED BELOW ARE 8 EXERCISES THAT HAVE BOTH A BODY WEIGHT OPTION AND AN EQUALIZER OPTION. YOU CAN PERFORM THEM AS DIRECTED BELOW TO FORM A COMPLETE HIIT WORKOUT OR SIMPLY ADD INDIVIDUAL EXERCISES TO YOUR OWN ROUTINE.

## THE WORKOUT

Set your timer for 40 seconds of work and 20 seconds rest.  
To make it easier you can adjust your intervals to 30 seconds work and 30 seconds rest.  
Aim to complete 3-4 rounds!

### EQUALIZER OPTION

#### IN & OUT STEPS



- Place Equalizer on side with feet facing away from you
- Ensure you lift your feet up and over the bar each time you step
- Step in and step out, speeding up to make harder
- Remember to switch lead foot each round or half way through interval
- Pump your arms for added intensity

### BODY WEIGHT OPTION

#### IN & OUT STEPS



- Same stepping pattern but without the bar as a guide
- Speed up to make harder
- Remember to switch lead foot each round or half way through interval
- Pump your arms for added intensity



## EQUALIZER OPTION

### KNEE RAISES



- Have EQualizer bars shoulder width apart so that your wrists and elbows are stacked under shoulders
- Keep shoulders pushed down away from your ears
- Lift legs using core, making sure not to swing or use momentum
- Maintain slow controlled movement
- Make harder by trying to extend legs in front of you (easier = 1 leg at a time, harder = both legs)

### MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS



- Place EQualizer bars shoulder width apart
- Your hands will be slightly forward due to the incline, this is ok
- Brace your core (pull your belly button towards your spine)
- Step one foot in at a time
- Speed up to make harder

# 2

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION

### LEG PIKE



- Sit on ground with legs extended in front of you, pointing toes
- Brace yourself with your hands in front of you on floor
- The further forward you place your hands the easier this will be
- To make easier you can also lean back slightly
- Use your core to lift your legs off the floor, when starting this can be a very small movement

### MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS



- Assume a high plank position (shoulders, elbows and wrists stacked)
- Keep core engaged
- Keep spine in a straight line
- Make sure pelvis is in anterior tilt (bum tucked, not sticking up)
- Step feet in to start and speed up into a jog to make harder

# 3

## EQUALIZER OPTION

### PLANK SIDE KICKS



- Place EQualizer on ground with feet facing away from you
- Grasp bars keeping your wrists straight
- Pelvis in anterior tilt and spine in straight line
- Slowly lift one leg then rotate from one side to the other kicking leg out to side
- Make harder by adding a pushup with the rotation

### STAR JUMPS



- Place 1 EQualizer upright in front of you
- Use the bar and your upper body to assist your jump
- When coming down, bend your elbows and lower chest towards bar
- Use your legs and arms to explode upwards on your jump
- To make harder try jumping with your legs extended to the sides
- Land softly bending your knees to cushion your landing

# 4

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION

### PLANK SIDE KICKS



- Do the same move with hands on the floor instead
- Do from a high plank position, or to make harder try from an elbow plank position

# 5

### IN & OUT JACKS



- Alternate raising your hands in front of you and overhead while doing a jumping jack
- For a lower impact version, do traditional jumping jacks and step to the side instead of jumping

## EQUALIZER OPTION

### RUNNING MAN



- Place EQualizer bars shoulder width apart so that shoulders/elbows/wrists are stacked
- Keep shoulders pulled down and away from your ears
- Slowly raise your feet in a bicycle or running type motion alternating which leg is extended
- Focus on using your core to lift your feet

### IN & OUT JUMP SQUATS



- Place the EQualizer on the floor, feet facing away from you
- Use the EQualizer as a guide/target ensuring you jump high enough to clear the bar
- Alternate with wide and narrow base jump squats

# 6

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION

### MARCH JACKS



- Use your core to lift your legs in a marching fashion
- Alternate legs and add a clap under with your arms
- Slow and controlled for more focus on core, can speed up for more of a cardiovascular focus

### POP SQUATS



- Alternate your hops with a wide and more narrow base squat landing

# 7



## EQUALIZER OPTION

### BURPEES



- Hold the EQualizer with feet facing away from you
- When you come down to the ground make sure your shoulders/elbows/wrists are stacked
- Keep core engaged as you pop your feet back into high plank position and then back in again towards the bar
- Modify by stepping feet out instead of popping them together
- Continue to hold onto EQualizer for added resistance at the top or leave on floor to make easier

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION

### BURPEES



- Perform the same exercise without the EQualizer, placing your hands on the floor instead
- Make sure shoulders/elbows/wrists are stacked when in high plank position
- Keep core engaged
- Can step back to modify or pop legs in and out
- Can add jump at top to make harder or omit if needed

# 8



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# Ana Sabaratnam

Ana Sabaratnam works in Law Enforcement, is a Certified Personal Trainer and Nutritionist and a positive force of “fitspiration” on Instagram.

She started with a martial arts background while in elementary school and has achieved her black belt in Shotokan Karate. Over the years, Ana has trained using different methodology and equipment; bodybuilding, non-traditional equipment and exercises, yoga flow, animal flow and has even achieved first place in her first Powerlifting competition. On her Instagram, she shares her versatility in training while continuously learning and developing her skills.



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# HIIT TRAINING

## Why HIIT Train?

HIIT stands for High Intensity Interval Training. HIIT is a form of cardiovascular training that alternates between short bursts of intense anaerobic exercises paired with less intense recovery periods. HIIT workouts provide improved athletic capacity as well as improved glucose metabolism. This workout will help you work on your coordination and explosive performance, while also testing stability and balance.

BECAUSE HIIT TRAINING IS INHERENTLY A VERY INTENSE FORM OF EXERCISE (YOU ARE WORKING AT CLOSE TO MAX EFFORT DURING THE INTERVALS) IT IS NOT IDEAL FOR BEGINNERS. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU HAVE A GOOD CARDIOVASCULAR BASE AND FOUNDATIONAL UNDERSTANDING ON PROPER FORM AND TECHNIQUE FOR STRENGTH EXERCISES BEFORE STARTING THIS TYPE OF TRAINING. IF YOU ARE UNSURE IF IT IS RIGHT FOR YOU, PLEASE CHECK WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR TRAINER FIRST.

## THE WORKOUT

Set your timer for 45 seconds of work and 15 seconds of rest.

To make it easier, you can adjust your intervals to 35 seconds work and 25 seconds rest.

Aim to complete 2-3 rounds!

### EQUALIZER OPTION



- Start in a shoulder-width stance holding the Equalizer
- Perform a squat (hinging at the hips, driving hips back, keeping shoulders back and chest up.
- On the way back up pivot your right foot, turning your body to the left while extending your right arm into a punch
- Repeat on other side

### SQUAT TO PUNCH



### BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Perform the same steps however, hold both hands, making fists by your face
- When extending your arm to perform a punch, rotate your wrist



## EQUALIZER OPTION



- Start standing with feet shoulder width apart holding the EQualizer slightly lower than 1/2 way down the legs
- Step back into a reverse lunge (keeping hips straight) raise the EQualizer straight above your head
- Push off of the back leg into a front kick while lowering the EQualizer
- Repeat on other side



- Start with your right leg back on its toes, arms extended straight above your head, holding the EQualizer
- Push off from your back leg and perform a knee strike forward
- As your knee comes up lower the EQualizer, with a bend in your elbow, so it is level in front of you
- Return to starting position and repeat on other side

## ALTERNATING OVERHEAD REVERSE LUNGES TO KICKS

# 2

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Perform the same steps however, instead of raising the EQualizer about your head, you are going to raise your arms straight above your head with palms facing forward
- Alternatively you could also perform while holding dumbbells

## ALTERNATING KNEE STRIKES

# 3



- Perform the same steps however, raise both arms above your head making fists and bring them down with more force for the knee strikes

## EQUALIZER OPTION



### HIP OPENER TO JAB-CROSS

# 4

- Start in a fight position (dominant leg back and fists by your face) with the EQualizer in front of you towards your dominant side
- Use the back leg to perform a hip opener; swinging leg up and over the EQualizer
- Step towards EQualizer with lead leg
- Perform a jab/cross combo
- Return to starting position and repeat

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Perform the same steps however, you are going to mimic the hip opener as if the EQualizer were there



### NARROW SQUAT TO SIDE KICK

# 5

- Start with narrow base stance holding the EQualizer at shoulder level
- Perform a squat
- On the way up perform a side kick while keeping your body facing forward
- Return back to the starting position and repeat on other side



- Perform the same steps however, keep both hands at face level making fists

## EQUALIZER OPTION

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



WOOD CHOP SIDE LUNGE

6



- Perform the same steps however, keep both arms straight and together holding hands together; having your arms cross your entire body when performing the exercise
- Alternatively you can perform while holding a single dumbbell by both hands

- Start in a lunge position, holding the Equalizer in front
- Push off of your lead foot while pivoting to face the opposite side as you raise the Equalizer across your body and over your head
- Lower the Equalizer across your body as you pivot back to the starting lunge position and repeat



ALTERNATING JUMP LUNGES TO FRONT KICK

7



- Perform the same movements but instead of holding the Equalizer handles you can just clasp your hands together
- You can still perform with the jump lunge, or to modify substitute the jump for a reverse lunge instead

- Start in a lunge position with both Equalizers on either side of your body, holding onto the grips of the Equalizer
- Push off of the back foot to a front kick then return back to the start position
- Using the Equalizers for leverage, jump and switch legs
- Repeat for other side

## EQUALIZER OPTION



HIP OPENER TO  
180 JUMP SQUAT

# 8

- Start in a standing position with the Equalizer positioned to the right of you
- Bring your right leg over the Equalizer followed by your left so you end up facing backwards
- Perform a 180 jump squat to face forward again
- Perform hip openers with left then right to return back to the other side of the Equalizer

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Perform the same steps (you will mimic the hip opener as if the Equalizer were there)



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# Nichelle Laus

Nichelle Laus is a mom of 4, a fitness expert, an on-air TV Fitness Personality, and a 7 time fitness cover model. She has also changed thousands of women's lives as a transformation specialist with her online training programs.



## LEBERT EQUALIZERS

Lebert EQualizers are the most stable bars without sacrificing the benefits of instability

With over 100 body-weight strength exercises for the beginner to the advanced, this high-quality functional fitness dip stand station with stabilizing challenger bars is perfect for full body bodyweight resistance exercises such as dips, push and pull ups, l-sits, knee and leg raises, stretches and more.

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# STRENGTH TRAINING

## Why Strength Train?

Resistance training is defined as any exercise that causes the muscles to contract against an external resistance with the expectation of increases in strength, tone, mass, and or endurance. Sources of resistance can be things like: dumbbells, resistance bands, your own bodyweight, bottles of water, or any object that causes your muscles to contract.

The benefits to having stronger muscles are numerous! Not only does this type of training build muscle (which we lose as we age) but it also builds stronger bones which can help prevent serious issues such as osteoporosis. It also helps us with weight management, injury prevention, improved stamina, improved sense of overall wellbeing, improved sleep, improved mobility and balance which can help in fall prevention, and so much more!



INCLUDED BELOW ARE 8 EXERCISES THAT HAVE BOTH AN EQUALIZER OPTION AND AN OPTION THAT YOU COULD UTILIZE DUMBBELLS (OR WATER BOTTLES) AS WELL AS A CHAIR

## THE WORKOUT

You can perform this workout in one of two ways:

As a circuit: 12-15 reps of each exercise (back to back to back) for a total of 3-4 rounds.

As a typical strength routine: 12-15 reps of each exercise (3-4 sets each) before moving on to the next exercise.

### EQUALIZER OPTION



- Stand straight up (shoulders back and down, chest up) with 1 EQualizer in each hand at shoulder height with your palms facing each other
- Press the EQualizer directly upwards until your arms are straight, keep core engaged so ribs don't flare
- Slowly lower the EQualizer back to the start position and repeat

### SHOULDER PRESS



### ALTERNATIVE OPTION



- Stand straight up (shoulders back and down, chest up) with a dumbbell in each hand at shoulder height with your palms facing away from you
- Press the weights directly upwards until your arms are straight, keep core engaged so ribs don't flare
- Slowly lower the weights back to the start position and repeat



## EQUALIZER OPTION



- Start on knees in high plank position with hands on EQualizer
- Keeping your body in a straight line, lower yourself down as far as you can comfortably
- Press back up using your chest and triceps to start position
- Progress by performing from toes instead

### KNEE PUSH-UPS

# 2

## ALTERNATIVE OPTION



- Start on knees in high plank position (hands shoulder width apart)
- Keeping your body in a straight line, lower yourself down as far as you can comfortably
- Press back up using your chest and triceps to start position
- Progress by performing from toes



- With 1 EQualizer in both hands, bend over at about a 45-degree angle making sure to keep your back straight
- Pull the EQualizer towards your belly, squeezing your shoulder blades together at the top, then lower to the start position
- Remain bent over until all repetitions are complete

### BENT OVER ROW

# 3



- With a dumbbell in each hand, bend over at about a 45-degree angle making sure to keep your back straight
- Pull the weights towards your belly, squeezing your shoulder blades together at the top, then lower to the start position
- Remain bent over until all repetitions are complete

## EQUALIZER OPTION



- Stand straight up with 1 Equalizer in your hands (palms facing up)
- With arms at your sides and your elbows locked next to your ribs, curl the Equalizer up
- Squeeze at the top, and slowly lower to the start position



- Stand with legs about hip-width apart, with a tight core, and squeeze your glutes
- Hold onto the Equalizer with both palms facing up
- Raise the Equalizer with both hands until your arms are close to being fully extended, and slowly lower it back to starting position
- Keep your upper arms by your ears the whole time

### BICEPS CURL

# 4

## ALTERNATIVE OPTION



- Stand straight up with a dumbbell in each hand, palms facing up
- With arms at your side and your elbows locked next to your ribs, curl the dumbbell up
- Squeeze at the top, and slowly lower to the start position



- Stand with legs about hip-width apart, with a tight core, and squeeze your glutes
- Make a 'basket' with your hands, holding just one head of the dumbbell in both palms
- Raise the dumbbell with both hands until your arms are close to being fully extended, and slowly lower it back to starting position
- Keep your upper arms by your ears the whole time

### TRICEPS EXTENSION

# 5

## EQUALIZER OPTION



- Stand about two feet in front of your EQualizer (If needed hold onto the other EQualizer for added balance)
- Lift your right leg behind you, hooking your ankle over the top of the bar.
- Begin bending your left knee, lowering yourself towards the ground, keeping your chest up
- When your left thigh is approximately parallel to the floor come back up to starting position
- Complete set reps then switch sides



- Lie down, with your back flat on the ground and hands by your sides. Put your heels (not your achilles) on top of the EQualizer
- Drive through your heel to lift your hips. Make sure not to arch your lower back
- At the top position, hold for 1-2 seconds. Lock out by squeezing your glutes (You should be in a straight line from the knees to the shoulders)
- Slowly lower to start position

## SPLIT SQUAT

# 6

## ALTERNATIVE OPTION



- Stand about two feet in front of a chair
- Lift your right leg behind you, and point your toe down on the chair's seat.
- Begin bending your left knee, lowering yourself towards the ground, keeping your chest up
- When your left thigh is approximately parallel to the floor, come back up to starting position
- Complete set reps then switch sides



- Lie down, with your back flat on the ground, neck relaxed, and hands by your sides. Put your heels on top of the chair's seat
- Drive through your heel to lift your hips. Make sure not to arch your lower back
- At the top position, hold for 1-2 seconds. Lock out by squeezing your glutes (You should be in a straight line from the knees to the shoulders)
- Slowly lower to start position

## HIP EXTENSIONS

# 7

## EQUALIZER OPTION



### ELBOW PLANK & TOUCH

# 8

- Start from an elbow plank position
- Brace your core to prevent your body from sagging, or your booty from sticking up
- Reach for the EQualizer with one arm. Come back to center, and reach for the EQualizer with the other arm
- Try not to shift your body too much to one side when you reach

## ALTERNATIVE OPTION



- Start from an elbow plank position
- Brace your core to prevent your body from sagging, or your booty from sticking up
- Reach for the dumbbell with one arm. Come back to center, and reach for the dumbbell with the other arm
- Try not to shift your body too much to one side when you reach



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## Luiza Silva

Luiza Silva is a passionate, creative trainer and movement coach. She's been in the wellness industry for 8 years and is an RYT 200, FRCms, TRX and aerial yoga coach. Luiza not only trains clients at Clifbar, Google and Adobe, but also runs teacher training programs, corporate wellness retreats and recently zoom private training. She can be found on Instagram at @themistressfitness.



### LEBERT PARALLETES

Lebert Parallette Bars are an essential piece of equipment for any body-weight strength training exercises and workouts. Increase muscle stamina, build shoulder and core strength while also reducing risk of wrist strain.

With its solid iron construction and high density, non-slip commercial grade grips, these are ideal for performing dips, pushups, l-sits, stretches and many more body-weight strength training exercises.

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# MOBILITY & FLEXIBILITY

## Why Train Mobility?

Mobility and flexibility training are key in creating a sustainable movement practice. Mobility is defined as the ability of a joint to move actively through a range of motion, where flexibility is the ability of a muscle to lengthen passively. Adequate mobility in a joint is what prepares it for the stress of strength training. It ensures that the joint will have a proper range of motion while working, which will allow proper technique and form, and therefore minimizes your risk of injury.



INCLUDED BELOW ARE 8 EXERCISES. ONE WITH A PARALLETTE OPTION AND ONE WITHOUT. YOU CAN PERFORM THEM AS DIRECTED BELOW TO FORM A MOBILITY FLOW OR SIMPLY ADD INDIVIDUAL EXERCISES TO YOUR OWN ROUTINE.

## THE WORKOUT

Grab your mat, a playlist, and your Parallettes!  
We'll be flowing through 15 slow reps of the dynamic exercises and up to two minute holds of the static exercises.

### PARALLETTE OPTION



- Place Parallette on a mat so it doesn't slide (if necessary)
- Position bar under bottom tip of shoulder blades
- Interlace fingers behind head to support neck and bend knees
- As you inhale slowly lean back, extend spine, and arch over Parallette
- As you exhale return to upright position

### THORACIC SPINE RELEASE

# 1

### ALTERNATIVE OPTION



- Place block on a mat so it doesn't slide. Place a blanket over the block for padding if needed
- Position edge of block under bottom tip of shoulder blades
- Interlace fingers behind head to support neck and bend knees
- As you inhale slowly lean back, extend spine, and arc over block
- As you exhale return to upright



## PARALLETTE OPTION



### SHOULDER MOBILITY FLOW

# 2

- Place hands shoulder distance apart on Parallette
- Start with hips over knees and arms extended straight
- Lightly press into Parallette on all fours as you exhale and slightly round your spine
- Release the press as you drop your chest toward the ground and inhale
- As you drop your chest toward the ground keep your hips stacked directly over your knees

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Place hands shoulder distance apart on floor
- Start with hips over knees and arms extended straight
- Lightly press into floor on all fours as you exhale and slightly round your spine
- Release the press as you drop your chest toward the ground and inhale
- As you drop your chest toward the ground keep your hips stacked directly over your knees



### SPINAL DECOMPRESSION

# 3

- Place Parallette in your hip crease above your pubic bone but below the top ridge of your pelvis and belly button
- Draw your shoulders forward until you feel light traction around your sacrum
- Extend your legs so your knees rest lightly on the ground
- Drape over the Parallette and allow your hips to hang on the bar as you rest your head comfortably on the ground



- Place edge of block in your hip crease above your pubic bone but below the top ridge of your pelvis and belly button
- Draw your shoulders forward until you feel light traction around your sacrum
- Extend your legs so your knees rest lightly on the ground
- Drape over the block and allow your hips to hang on the block as you rest your head comfortably on the ground



## PARALLETTE OPTION



- Place Parallette a little over shoulder width apart on a surface that allows feet to slide
- Square hips to face forward, firmly grip Parallette and lift into upper range of split
- Start with the isometric contraction by squeezing feet toward each other without moving. Hold for 10 sec
- Release into lowest comfortable split position while supporting yourself with the Parallette. Hold for 60 sec



- Start in a low squat (option to use a stool or place hips against a wall for support if needed)
- Grasp Parallette bar at widest point with legs overhead
- Maintain low squat as you bring Parallette to chest and then overhead press

### ACTIVE/PASSIVE SPLITS FLOW

# 4

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Place block opposite front leg on a surface that allows feet to slide
- Square hips to face forward, firmly press on block and lift into upper range of split
- Start with the isometric contraction by squeezing feet toward each other without moving. Hold for 10 sec
- Release into lowest comfortable split position while supporting yourself with the block. Hold for 60 sec

### SOTS PRESS VARIATION

# 5



- Start in a low squat (option to use a stool or place hips against a wall for support if needed)
- Grasp block overhead
- Maintain low squat as you bring block to chest and then overhead press
- Option to use 2 blocks if needed

## PARALLETTE OPTION



- Place mat under knee and hook back toe over Parallette
- Start by actively tucking the pelvis with your torso upright to lengthen quads
- Alternate by releasing and shifting forward into a low lunge

### QUADS RELEASE

# 6

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Place mat under knee and hook back toe over block
- Start by actively tucking the pelvis with your torso upright to lengthen quads
- Alternate by releasing and shifting forward into a low lunge



- Start in a low lunge with back knee on a mat
- Place foot on Parallette and grasp bar with an underhand grip
- Keep spine long and torso upright as you tuck pelvis and lean into your low lunge

### HIP MOBILITY & PSOAS RELEASE

# 7



- Start in a low lunge with back knee on a mat
- Place foot on block and grasp a nearby prop for balance
- Keep spine long and torso upright as you tuck pelvis and lean into your low lunge

## PARALLETTE OPTION



- Comfortably fold supporting leg toward hips, option to lean against the wall for added support
- Start by flexing foot and placing your ankle on the Parallette bar
- If it's within your range bring the knee onto the bar to stack the entire calf directly over the bar
- Lengthen spine and gently pull your chest toward your calf

## BODY WEIGHT OPTION



- Comfortably fold supporting leg toward hips, option to lean against the wall for added support
- Start by flexing foot and placing your ankle on the block
- If it's within your range bring the knee over the block to stack the entire calf on the block
- Lengthen spine and gently pull your chest toward your calf

### PIGEON POSE

# 8



**LEBERT**  
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## Dr. Paul Sly

### Chiropractor

*Oxygen Advantage Master Instructor*

Dr. Paul Sly is a Chiropractor and certified Oxygen Advantage Master Instructor trained by founder and author Patrick McKeown.

Paul has a general practice where he treats an active population of people from all walks of life, from children to adults, including weekend warriors, NHL hockey players, professional and elite level Powerlifters, Strongmen and Strongwomen competitors.

Paul uses functional breathing and wellness education and techniques to help individuals, organizations and corporations reduce stress, anxiety and burnout, and increase focus, attention and mental and physical performance – improving the health of the individual and the organization.

Paul works one on one and in small and large group settings, customizing the education and training to suit the individual needs of the client or organization.



*"We can go 3 weeks without food,  
3 days without water, but less than 3  
minutes without breathing...  
What's most important?"*



# BREATHING FACTS & FICTION

## Breathing: You've Been Doing it Wrong All Along!

Well, probably not *all* along.

If you watch a baby breathing, they tend to use their nose (if they're not crying) and there is a gentle rise and fall of their abdomen, with very little chest movement. Before long, we begin exposure to allergens causing many to have nasal congestion, forcing mouth breathing. We are told to "suck in our stomach" which forces the diaphragm to be rigid and leads to upper chest breathing, or sometimes even paradoxical breathing where the abdomen moves in with the inhale and out with the exhale, opposite to good breathing mechanics.

"Modern" changes in paediatric nutrition and a reliance on processed foods means we don't develop sucking and chewing with force, causing a lack of good airway development. There is little interest or understanding of good breath mechanics on the part of conventional medicine AND most alternative practitioners, coaches and instructors. All of this leads to a population with very poor functional breathing and high rates of breathing pattern disorders, which negatively affects virtually every aspect of health and performance.



## BREATH MYTHS

The lack of interest and understanding of breathing has led to the development of modern "Breath Myths" as outlined by Robin Rothenberg in her book Restoring Prana. These myths need to be deconstructed in order to appreciate what good functional breathing is.

# 1

*"THE MORE WE BREATHE THE HEALTHIER WE ARE"*

**Truth: More Isn't Necessarily Better.**

Similar to caloric intake, there is a "right amount of air." A healthy person averages 10-12 breaths and 4-6 litres of air per minute. Studies have shown individuals with various diseases and conditions breathe at a rate of 15-20 breaths and 10-15 litres of air per minute.

*"TAKING A BIGGER BREATH OXYGENATES US MORE"*

**Truth: Bigger Breathing De-Oxygenates Us.**

When we take bigger breaths than our current metabolism demands, we blow off too much carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). The problem is CO<sub>2</sub> is a vasodilator, opening up our blood vessels and improving blood flow, and it is also necessary to drive oxygen from the hemoglobin on our red blood cells into the tissues that need it. So when we breathe big and blow off too much CO<sub>2</sub>, we decrease blood flow and oxygen delivery to the cells that need it. As an example, 30 seconds of hyperventilating decreases blood flow to the brain by almost 50%!

# 2

# #3



*"TAKING A DEEP BREATH MEANS TAKING A BIG BREATH"*

**Truth: Deep and Big are Not the Same.**

Deep means "far from the top" - in this context the top is the nose and deep is the base of the lungs at the diaphragm. A deep breath means using your nose and diaphragm to pull the inspired air into the base of the lungs, where most of the blood flow is and therefore where the best exchange of gases takes place. A deep breath means using your nose and diaphragm to pull the inspired air into the base of the lungs, where most of the blood flow is and therefore where the best exchange of gases takes place.

*"THE NEED FOR OXYGEN GOVERNS OUR RESPIRATORY RATE"*

**Truth: Carbon Dioxide Regulates Our Respiratory Rate.**

The chemoreceptors that send information to our brainstem telling us how much to breathe are sensing carbon dioxide not oxygen. As our activity increases so does metabolic demand, causing our cells to produce more carbon dioxide which signals our body to breathe harder to blow it off. If we habitually hyperventilate, which many of us do, our bodies get used to lower levels of carbon dioxide and any slight increase causes us to breathe more - a vicious cycle!

# #4

# #5



*"CARBON DIOXIDE IS TOXIC AND WE NEED TO FULLY EXHALE TO GET RID OF AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE"*

**Truth: Carbon Dioxide is Critical for Maintaining Homeostasis and Health.**

Your cells produce carbon dioxide as a metabolic waste product and in high concentrations it can be toxic, but so can oxygen in high enough concentrations. It is maintaining the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide that is important, as this manages the delicate balance of acidity and alkalinity (pH). Sufficient levels of carbon dioxide are necessary for us to optimally utilize oxygen.

# #6

*"IT IS NECESSARY TO EMPTY THE LUNGS OF AIR"*

**Truth: The Lungs Always Maintain a Residual Volume of Air.**

There is a perception that the lungs need to be cleared of "bad" or "stale" air. Our lungs always maintain a residual volume which in healthy adults is 1.1-1.2 liters. The residual volume keeps the lungs expanded between breaths, ensuring they do not collapse. The misguided advice to "empty your lungs" results in lowering carbon dioxide levels too much, again hampering our ability to use oxygen.

## What is Healthy Breathing?

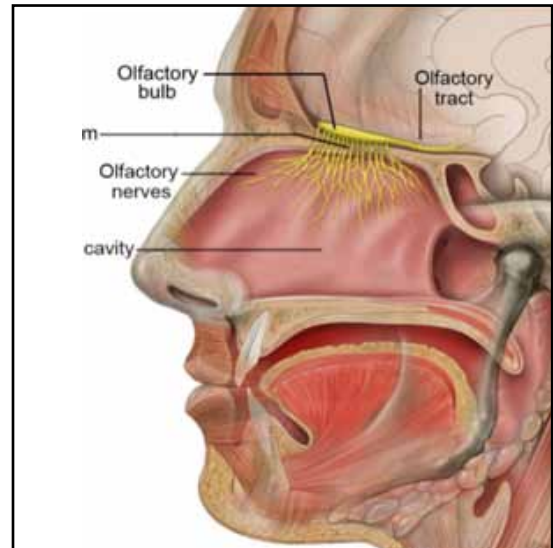
Healthy breathing is in and out through the nose, engaging the diaphragm, at a rate and volume matching the current metabolic needs of the body. If you are at rest, your breathing should be quiet, with little or no movement of the upper chest and neck muscles. Your breathing should only increase on pace with your increasing activity levels, and as you approach maximum effort you may need to mouth breath for short periods. The concept of "breathing gears" from Brian Mackenzie and the Human Health and Performance Institute can be helpful.

Most athletes and individuals who have not been trained in proper breathing shift from gear 1 to gear 5 and stay there. This results in inefficient breathing. The energy used by the breathing muscles is disproportionately high, and we blow off too much CO2, hampering our ability to use the oxygen we are sucking in through our mouths.



# STOP SUCKING IN AIR WITH YOUR NECK MUSCLES

These are meant to be accessory breathing muscles not the mainstay



## Why the Nose?

Your nose performs more than 30 functions related to breathing; your mouth performs none. We fall into thinking that our nose is the two holes in our face. In reality the nose is the entire space above the roof of your mouth. The nose prepares air for your lungs much the same way the mouth prepares food for your stomach.

Your Nose:

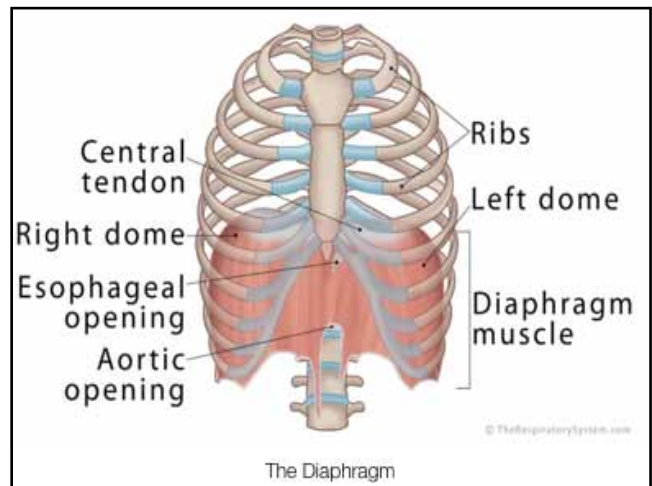
- Is your immune system's first line of defense, filtering the air and exposing it to immune cells in the nasal mucosa
- The nose warms and moisturizes the air, and recaptures moisture on the exhale - 40% less water loss!
- The nose adds nitrous oxide (NO) to the air, a potent vasodilator which helps gas exchange in the lungs and also acts to sterilize the air
- The nose activates the diaphragm, automatically making the breath "deep" pulling the air into the lower lobes of the lungs
- The nose is your body's built in regulator, allowing adequate oxygen in and preventing too much carbon dioxide from being exhaled, maintaining the delicate balance of oxygen, carbon dioxide and pH

## Why the Diaphragm?

The diaphragm is the largest and most prominent breathing muscle, and it is built to carry the load of respiration, along with the intercostal muscles.

Your Diaphragm:

- The diaphragm acts as a visceral muscle and represents the meeting point of the cardiovascular, digestive, musculoskeletal and autonomic nervous systems
- The diaphragm is designed to function along with the thoracic, abdominal and pelvic core, acting as a primary stabilizer for functional movement
- Consistent and correct movement of the diaphragm with breathing plays a major role in the physiological health of all systems





## What is Healthy Breathing?

There are three components of functional breathing  
- the biochemistry, biomechanics, and psychophysiology.

A consideration of the biochemistry of breathing means breathing at a rate and volume that prevents lowering carbon dioxide levels too much, maintaining the delicate balance of pH of the blood, allowing for maximal blood flow and oxygenation of the tissues.

Focusing on biomechanics of breathing means using the nose to activate the diaphragm and intercostal muscles to draw the air deep into the lungs for the most efficient exchange of gases.

The psychophysiology of breathing focuses on breathing at a rate of between 4.5 and 6.5 breaths per minute, which study after study has shown results in the best balance between the two branches of the autonomic nervous system, the fight or flight sympathetic branch, and the rest and digest parasympathetic branch. This is also known as sympathovagal balance.

## Take the Test - Your Control Pause (CP)

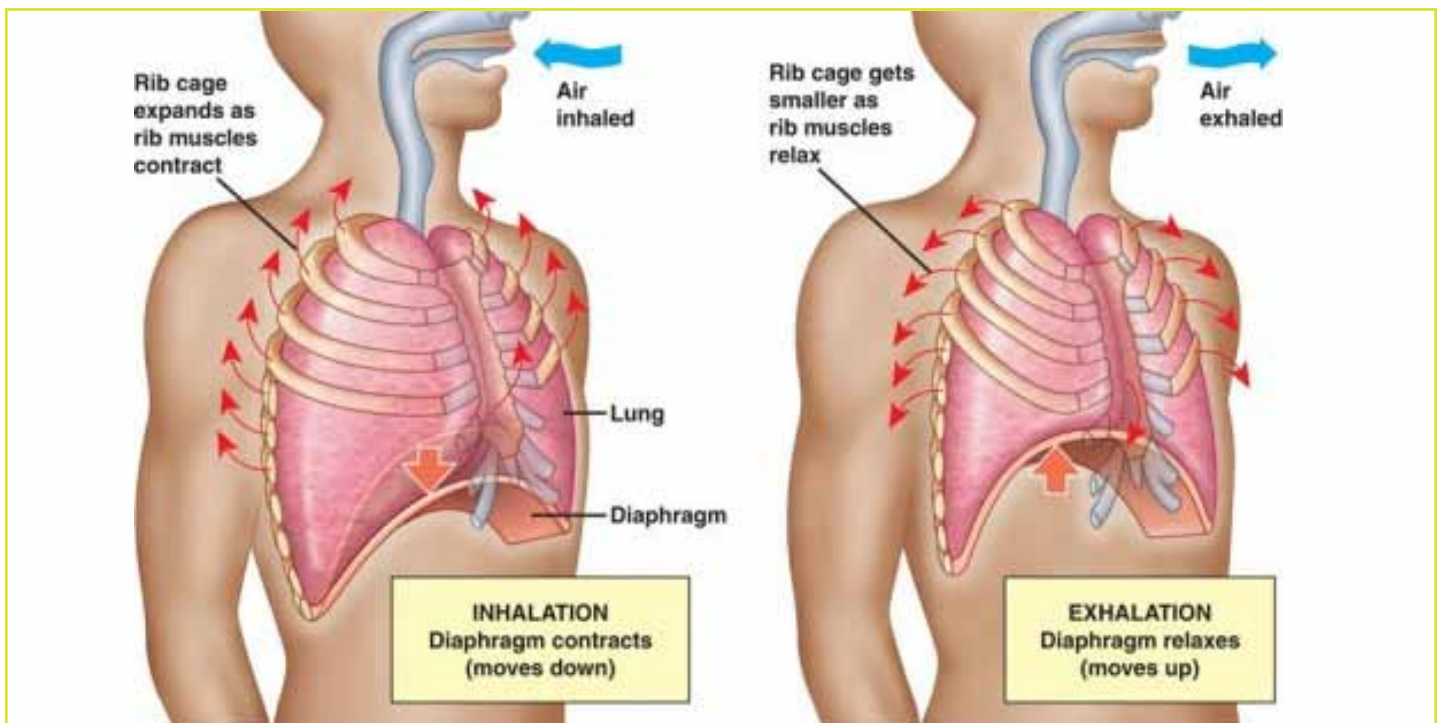
Your CP is a great self-assessment measure to accurately gauge your level of functional breathing. It is an indirect measure of your bodies sensitivity to CO<sub>2</sub>.

All you need to take your CP is a device to measure in seconds - your phone, stopwatch or a clock with a seconds hand.

### To Take Your CP:

- Sit comfortably and relax for 3-5 minutes
- When ready, take a normal breath in through your nose, a normal breath out through your nose, pinch your nose and start the timer
- Hold your breath only until you feel the first definite physiological urge to breath - this will be a contraction of your diaphragm in your belly or the muscles around your throat
- Resume breathing and note the time in seconds - that is your control pause
- This is NOT a maximum breath hold and it is done on the exhale - if you resume breathing at the first definite urge your next breath back in will be as soft and relaxed as your last breath before the hold

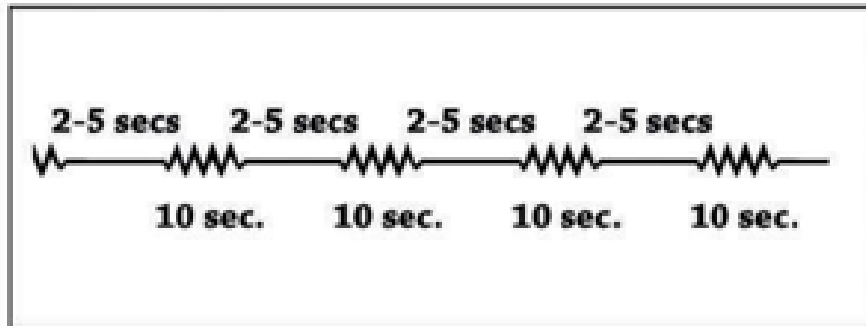
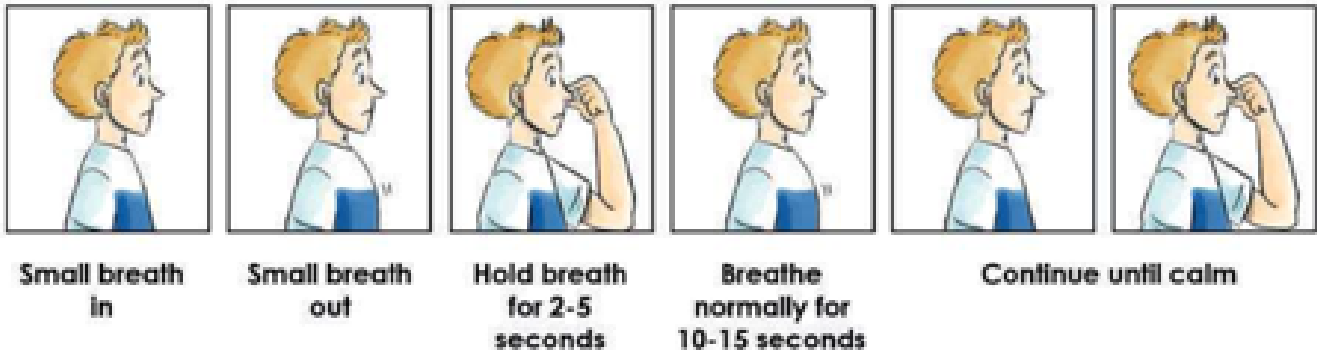
A CP of less than 25 seconds is indicative of a breathing pattern disorder, with a lot of room for improving functional breathing. The ideal CP for maximizing mental and physical performance is at least 40 seconds.



TRY THIS QUICK EXERCISE ON YOUR OWN:

# SHORT BREATH HOLDS

A great first simple exercise to introduce is many Short Breath Holds (SBH's). This is a fabulous first part of a warm up. It introduces the body to a tolerable air hunger, signifying an increase of CO2 in the body. This increases oxygenation to all body tissues, via the BOHR effect, the vasodilatory affect of CO2 and the increase in NO as discussed above. It raises body temperature, and gets you focusing on your breathing. It can also be used as a very effective means of stopping a panic attack or even an asthma attack in the early stages.



## TO PERFORM SBH's:

The mouth is gently closed and the tongue is sitting against the roof of the mouth. Take a normal breath in through your nose, a normal breath out, pinch your nose (or just hold your breath without pinching if you don't wish anyone to know what you are doing) and hold your breath for 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 seconds. Resume with a breath in through your nose, take one or two breaths for about 10 seconds, and repeat.

You can perform this for 3-5 minutes to begin a warm up or for as long as it takes to help with a panic attack or mild asthma attack - always use rescue medication in a timely fashion. It should be an easy breath hold creating only a mild air hunger. Increase the length of the breath hold only to 1/2 of your BOLT score i.e. if your BOLT is 20 seconds, the SBH should be no longer than 10 seconds.





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