

Ep #26: Breathing When Feeling Wired



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With Your Host

Susi Hatelty

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Male Announcer: You're listening to *From Pain to Possibility* with Susi Hately. You will hear Susi's best ideas on how to reduce or even eradicate your pain and learn how to listen to your body when it whispers so you don't have to hear it scream. And now here's your host, Susi Hately.

Susi: With this episode I want to dig into a couple of breathing exercises specifically related to when we feel fidgety and wired. A lot of times closer and closer to Christmas there is that energy of fidgety and wired that enters into the space for my clients. Whether it's because they're getting tired and they need to put the gas pedal down and go a little bit more and maybe operate a bit more outside of their capacity and then they get into that wired, big energy type of state and it's fidgety.

They find that their legs become a little more restless or the foot starts tapping a bit more. When they sit on the couch they can't quite down regulate, they just fall asleep. So, when you're noticing that happening these two breathing exercises can be helpful. Now, they can also be helpful outside of the time of fidgety and wired, but because this is a time of year when that starts to increase even particularly given the year that we are in with COVID they can be particularly helpful. That's why I'm introducing them to you this week before Christmas.

Keep in mind that when you practice them or when you're finished practicing them you might feel tired. A lot of times when people are in that fidgety and wired state they don't realize how tired they are because often when you're wired you're also in a state of alertness so you don't quite feel tired. So, if you'd practiced this and you noticed that you're tired that's okay because tired comes before wired.

If you notice that you're tired then you can really do the next intervention to really support yourself. That will really recuperate yourself and help your energy and your stamina become more sustainable. With that, let's come into these two exercises. Now, before I get into each of these I need to say up front that you know your body best and if as we do these practices they aren't working for you then please stop. I can't see you. All I'm doing is

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instructing you and ultimately you have to decide whether this is working for you or not.

So, if you feel light-headed, if there's any pain or strain, anything that makes your eyebrows sort of go, "What is she doing?" I would say that's a great reason to stop. Any extraneous tension, pain, light-headedness, anything in that realm. So, let's begin the practice.

The first exercise we'll do is called Tarzan breathe. As you can imagine it's like your hands are fisting, well your hands are going to fist, but it's like you're Tarzan in the jungle and you are beating your chest. That's exactly what we're going to do. You're going to inhale through your nose and then exhale through your mouth with a "hah" sound.

Now, you could exhale through your nose, but I find in that fidgety and wired state breathing out through the mouth can be very, very, very helpful in dissipating some of that nervous energy. But I leave it in your hands whether you decide to go through the nose which will slow you down a little faster or out through your mouth, you decide.

So, we'll be taking the fists, placing them on the ribcage and then beginning to pound your chest gently. You'll be covering your whole ribcage down below, to the sides, in the front, and if you have someone close by they can even do the back of your ribcage. All the while you're breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth making that sound of "hah."

I do this with my kids sometimes and they're three and a half years old and they love it. It really brightens them up. They have their little fists on the front and then I come in around the back and fist around the back of their ribcage. A lot of my clients when they've done this, they feel much clearer in their mind. As I mentioned earlier sometimes they'll also feel fatigued.

So, to begin, if you haven't started already just gently fist your hands and gently tap your ribcage like you are Tarzan breathing in through the nose

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and out through the mouth. Hah. Hah. Cover your whole ribcage. Hah. Hah. Hah. One more. Hah.

Now, having done that notice what it is that you feel. Maybe there's a difference in quality of your breathing or quantity of how you're inhaling or exhaling. Maybe there's just a different sense of feel through your state of being or your body. Take a moment and notice.

Now, as I mentioned earlier you don't have to wait until you're fidgety and wired to do this. When I first learned this practice I did it often in the morning in the shower and it helped get my day going. It helped to brighten things up a little bit in my breathing. It helped me connect that much more closely with the inhale and the exhale. So, really this can be done at any time. Just notice how your breath feels before going in, notice what happens while you're doing it, and of course, evaluate what's happened after.

Which brings us to the second exercise which is called sounding the vowels. Now, what I love about this exercise is it's quite sneaky. When we are in a wired or in a fidgety type of state our brain tends to latch on to things and not want to settle or slow down or it has trouble doing that. When we give it something to focus on like sounding a vowel, we give it a job to do and we're lengthening our exhalation as we sound that vowel.

So, not only do we give our brains something to do, but physiologically we start to wind down. We start to slow down because that exhale is getting longer. Like the first exercise, if you find that this exercise does not work for you, if it increases your fidgetiness or your anxiety or your nervousness or if you just feel funny or in pain or light-headed then please do not do it, just stop.

Now, my exhalation might be shorter or it might be longer than yours so then you just do what you need to do to keep the process going. The vowels that we're going to sound are A, E, I, O, and U. What's interesting is many people will also notice that the way the vowel sounds in their mouth

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resonates differently than the others. So, A sounds different or resonates differently than E, I, O, and U. You might notice this, too. It's not always something that's noticed, but sometimes it is and so if it is just notice the various qualities between the vowels.

We'll do two cycles, go through all the vowels, A, E, I, O, U and then do a second cycle right after and then we'll take a break. Of course, if you need to take a break at any point during this before I do then please do that. Please take care of yourself. Let's inhale. A. E. I. O. U. A. E. I. O. U.

Now, just breathe. No sound in of the exhale, feeling the inhale and the exhale, the quality, your state of being, your body. Now, you can do these breathing exercises anywhere, any time that you want. We sounded that exhalation. You could practice it by not actually sounding it out loud. It will be a bit of a different exercise, but the focus on that vowel as you exhale will still be there.

So, if you find yourself in a situation where you do want to do the sound with the exhale, but making the sound is not necessarily appropriate then you can play around with following the vowel with your exhale and just not making a sound.

If these breathing exercises have really resonated for you and you can see the benefit of how they shift up not only your breathing but also your state of mind and your body and you're starting to really grasp or sense or experience for real the relationship between your breath, your body, your state of being and how this can impact so much more from not only respiration but also from mental health, digestion, and sleep then you will really love the upcoming course, Mechanics of Breathing. You can find it directly through the URL mechanicsofbreathing.com and that can be found in the show notes as well. We begin in January. I look forward to seeing you there.