

Download 1

Without breath Yoga is nothing more than an outward expression of physical movement.

Ujjayi is a specialized breathing technique used in Yoga. This unique form of breathing is performed by creating a soft sound in the back of the throat while inhaling and exhaling through the nose. While breathing you allow the air to swirl around the back of the throat before continuing the journey into the lungs. Breathing into the diaphragm rather than abdomen. This swirling action is what creates the unique sound which could be described as wind in the tress, a distant ocean or Darth Vader from star wars.

To help if you are new to this type of breathing you can use an exercise called the Hhhaaa Method. Sitting up straight take a full inhale through the nose then let it out through the mouth with the soft sound Hhhaaa as though you are whispering. Feel the air swirl in the back of the throat. Take a few breaths like this and then midway through an exhale, close your mouth and let the air continue exiting through the mouth instead of the mouth. Once you are able to create the sound in the back of the throat while exhaling, you are halfway to a full Ujjayi breath. The second step is to gently smile while inhaling and create the same swirling sound as on the exhale.

The main idea is to create a rhythm in the breath and ride it throughout the practice. This sound becomes a type of meditation to set the mind in focus. You must learn to listen to the breath, it is a guide to how well you are doing. Too much effort and the breath can become constricted and forced, too little and the breath gets drowned out by your own thoughts.

With the breath every movement becomes a meditation.

The above teaching method for practicing this breathing technique has been taken from Ashtanga Yoga "The practice Manual" by David Swenson. David Swenson is recognized as one of the world's leading practitioners and teachers of Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga.

If you are seriously into your Yoga then this book is a great investment for both beginners and the more experienced students.

See you on the mat